



East Yorkshire and Derwent Ramblers

# Area News

Autumn 2023

## Message From our Area Chair- Roy Hunt

Since last year our group committees and area council are finding it increasingly difficult to function as before. There are exceptions, GYBO for instance appears to be going from strength to strength. I know we lost walk leaders because of the introduction of risk assessments which I and many others thought were "over the top". I was therefore not surprised when an independent consultant employed by Ramblers stated: "The Ramblers operate the tightest demands we have seen in the study for conducting a risk assessment. No other organisation was found to require a walk leader to complete a written risk assessment for every route, every time, and record it themselves for three years." I have been advised that the current risk assessments (which are not obligatory, but advisory) will be replaced with something much more appropriate. We will have to wait and see.

Area Council has agreed our budget for the next twelve months, which is in line with previous years except that we have had removed our budget for walk leader training. Given all of the emphasis on walk safety over previous years I am somewhat bemused.

I have just received a copy of a revised ten year strategy being proposed for adoption by our General Council members. A former Ramblers trustee has commented: "The strategy contains many nice words but is devoid of any substance and is obsessed with the economically disadvantaged communities and minorities". Most of the proposals are very much in line with what we do at present. There are some specific objectives referenced in the document I would like to comment on "Equitable access for all communities in England, Scotland and Wales to walk outdoors." Yes, improving the provision of open spaces for all to enjoy is a vision that we can work towards, but equitable access is, alas, impossible to achieve. "We'll make our walk leader advice and training more relevant and more easily accessible to communities across England, Scotland and Wales, giving more people the skills and confidence to go walking." During the pandemic lockdowns there was a substantial increase in the number of people wanting to explore the countryside. We could have taken advantage by making our on-line educational tools (for instance map reading) and all Ramblers Routes available to the general public. I would like to see this happen under this new strategy. " From the practical perspective of our geographic area, our members broadly live in the more affluent areas of our territory, thus proximity to where action is required is likely to become an issue.

Personally I would prefer to see much more emphasis on supporting our groups and areas. We are struggling to carry on doing what we have been doing for decades. There are around 100 staff in our central office and, quite frankly, too many people ask us what they all find to do if they are not supporting us. Finally, I would like to ask all of our members to make a special effort to attend the our next AGM when I trust we will be able to gain a better understanding of how our new strategy will be delivered and any impact on our area and groups. However, last night I was updating my diary with the date of our son's wedding and discovered that it clashes with the AGM. I am sorry that I will not be with you.

## Notice of 2024 Area AGM

All East Yorkshire & Derwent Area Ramblers members are invited to attend our **Annual General Meeting at 2.00 pm on Saturday January 27th 2024 at the Friends Meeting House, Scarborough YO12 5QZ**, it is close to Scarborough hospital; there is parking at the venue but if the car park is full please park further up Woodlands Drive, between the hospital and the crematorium. Prior to the meeting there will be a 6 mile walk starting from the venue at 10am, through Peasholm Gardens and to the coast, finishing about 12.30pm. The Hall will be open from 12.30pm if walkers wish to eat their sandwiches before the meeting, tea/coffee will be available; alternatively there are numerous pubs, cafes and shops nearby. We are hoping to have several speakers including a retired ranger from the North Yorks National Park and a trustee.

There will be no mailshot in January, if you wish to receive a copy of the Annual Report by post please contact Ann Laing by 10th January, either by email: [annilaing25@gmail.com](mailto:annilaing25@gmail.com) or send a text message to 07919 105401. Copies of the Annual Report will also be available in January on the Area website, from Group secretaries and at the AGM.

## **VACANT POSTS -**

**Area footpath officers** for York and parts of North Yorkshire and also Footpath officer for East Riding; both these posts are still vacant, our chair Roy Hunt has temporarily taken on both roles but protecting footpaths and Rights of Way is a key part of the Ramblers objectives. The work is very rewarding and there is expertise and advice available for any volunteers. Please consider whether you could take on one of these key roles.

**Membership Secretary:** Ann Laing has decided to step down after many years of volunteering for Area roles, this is an important post for the smooth running of the Area, again advice and help is available to anyone taking on this role.

**Environment Officer:** Peter Ayling has retired from this role but would be happy to train and advise anyone.

## National Young Ramblers Weekend

At the start of July, GYBO hosted the National Young Ramblers Weekend in York – which we had originally planned for 2020, but had to postpone. The weekend was a great success – we mobilised an army of 20 volunteers to help with everything from meeting guests when they arrived at the station, preparing the venues, and – most importantly – leading walks! We were delighted to welcome 70 guests from a range of groups spanning the whole country, from Edinburgh, Essex, Exmoor and many more places in between. Some guests had been to previous NYR events, but many were here for the first time, and some groups came for the first time which was great to see.



Early bird arrivals on the Friday had the chance of a guided tour round the city walls, then it was off to the pub for welcome and introductions, pizza and a quiz; our thanks go to the Old Grey Mare in Clifton, who allowed us to use their function space and kept us well supplied with pizza and drinks.

On Saturday, guests had the choice of five walks of varying degrees of distance and difficulty, covering Knaresborough, Castle Howard, Helmsley, Yorkshire Wolds and Sutton Bank, ranging from 8 miles to 14 miles.



Miraculously, everyone turned up at the right time & place to catch the bus, train or coach to the walk they had booked! The weather was kind to us, and everybody enjoyed their walk, although a few people remarked that they were disappointed that they could only do one – so we may see them back to visit Yorkshire another day! After everyone had returned to York and freshened up, we reconvened in the Pitcher and Piano for dinner and a ceilidh, with plaudits from the band for the energy and enthusiasm that everyone showed after a hard day on the hills.

Sunday gave people a choice of 3 shorter walks in and around York, followed by lunch back in the city centre, giving guests plenty of time to get home in the afternoon, and the organising committee the chance for a well-earned rest!  
Stephen Down

## The Ramblers involvement in the annual 'Walking East Yorkshire Festival'

Every September East Riding of Yorkshire Council promotes an event to celebrate the 'Great Outdoors' with a packed programme of activities at the annual "Walking East Yorkshire Festival". The festival this year was held from Saturday 9th to Friday 22nd September.

Our local Ramblers Groups have again heavily contributed to the walking element of the festival by incorporating programmed led walks in the East Riding area into the Festival Programme. Pocklington Ramblers also designed special walking events for the festival, working in close partnership with East Riding Council. Over the years, our involvement in this festival has resulted in new members joining the Ramblers as the events showcase the benefits of walking with our groups.

Over recent years, we have completed long-distance walks as part of the festival programme, including the Yorkshire Wolds Way, Minster Way, Headland Way, Chalkland Way, Centenary Way and Driffeld Wold Rangers Way. Our group have organised the walking and logistical elements including the provision of walk leaders, and the Council have provided the administrative elements of taking bookings and providing coaches. Our two planned walks this year were an exhilarating coastal walk on a newly opened section of the 'King Charles III England Coast Path' between Bridlington and Filey, and the North Wolds Walk, a Yorkshire Wolds circular walk from Millington, passing through Great Givendale, Bishop Wilton, Kirby Underdale and Thixendale.  
Martin Hill - Pocklington Ramblers



## Ramblers Have Stand at Beverley Minster Eco Fair

On 30th September Beverley Minster held an Eco fair event to raise awareness of local initiatives to combat climate change. It coincided with the installation of Gaia- a massive (7 metre) installation of our beautiful planet.



Over 3,500 visitors attended the event and the Ramblers were represented with a table top display promoting the health benefits of walking. Area Secretary and 6 members of the Beverley group answered questions explaining who we are and what we do for the public.

It was also an opportunity to hear talks on a variety of topics -from environmentally friendly trains, I didn't realise that diesel locomotive has an thermal efficiency of just 25% and that a ground source heat pump requires a trench 100 meters long or deep !

The stall didn't cost us anything and our Area secretary has plenty of publicity material available for use by all groups at similar events. We had many interesting conversations with potential walkers and members. Perhaps next time we do such an event we should count how many folk stop for a chat. Joe Neal



## Area Camp June 2023

This year's annual Area Camp was held on Friday 9th to Monday 12th June in the Blackwell area of the Peak District. The camp was organised by Donna & Wayne Dossdale and 12 members from various groups attended.

As usual there was a shorter walk on the Friday afternoon (Millers Dale), full day walks on the Saturday (Eyam area ) and Sunday (Hartington taking in Wolfscote Dale), unfortunately the planned walk for Monday had to be cancelled due to the heat.



## Pocklington Ramblers Walking the Cleveland Way in 2023

We are fortunate to have the Cleveland Way on our doorstep and there was interest from several members to walk this national trail over the summer. Our Group last completed this 109 mile long distance trail in 2014. Our plan was to start from Helmsley on 3rd May and finish in Filey on 4th October. We divided the Cleveland Way into 11 stages on alternative Wednesdays as part of the Pocklington walks programme. The first stages were across the North Yorkshire Moors, before reaching the coast at Saltburn-by-the-Sea, and then following the coastline to Filey.

Each of the 11 stages was a linear walk and we hired a coach to take us from the meeting point of each stage to go to the start point of the walk of that particular section. There was an overwhelming response by members to walk the trail, and most sections were fully booked. The limiting factor was the number of seats available on the coach and an average of 32 members walked each section. We had good weather on the trail and most importantly, were left with a sense of achievement and happy memories of a very enjoyable 11 days. Martin Hill Pocklington Ramblers



## Rambles for Wheelchair Users

Ramblers believe it is essential to make paths accessible to disabled people and wheelchair users in a way that is sensitive to the local environment.

This year's 'Walking East Yorkshire Festival' introduced a 'Disabled Rambler' event, intended for wheelchair users. Organised by ERYC's Countryside Access Team in partnership with Experience Countryside [info@experiencecommunity.co.uk] and National Trails, two 7 mile circular trails using parts of The Yorkshire Wolds Way were devised. Starting from Goodmanham and Fridaythorpe, the latter being more challenging was recce'd by a wheelchair user.

Route preparation was undertaken by Pocklington's footpath maintenance team. This included ensuring kissing gates equipped with RADAR locks were functioning, clearing gate areas and bridges, plus removing undergrowth from paths to enable unobstructed wheelchair passage.



The participants, all experienced in such rambles, use 'Mountain Trikes'. These machines require physical power but are equipped with a back-up battery pack. Unfortunately, day one followed thunder storms and heavy rain causing some cancellations and route revision due to excessive mud and waterlogged areas. After a wet but pleasant ramble everyone dried out whilst enjoying tea and cake at Goodmanham's Fiddle and Drill café.

Photos showing some of the participants and guides are courtesy of ERYC Countryside Access Team

Tony Corrigan Pocklington Group



## Beverley Group Walking Holiday around Sedburgh.

At the end of October, twenty-two members of Beverley Ramblers Group enjoyed a 4-night stay in Cumbria, booked with HF Holidays. The location we chose was the charming, Harry Potter-esque Thorns Hall, a very old Manor House dating from 1535. The House lies close to the centre of the small town of Sedburgh. This pretty Cumbrian town nestles at the edge of the Howgill Fells, sandwiched between the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales. The House is run as a hotel by HF holidays; it was an excellent base for our four walks, all of which we started from its doorstep. This was our fourth annual holiday based at one of HF's houses.

The in-house catering was of typically high standard, providing us with cooked breakfasts, an excellent packed lunch and a choice of dishes for our evening meals. The staff were friendly and very helpful, Gabriel the barman went "the extra mile" in providing extra seating for us in the cosy bar room and even picking cooking apples for some of us from trees in the hotel's garden. Although we weren't blessed with sunshine, the paths were all much drier than we expected.

Starting from the House, most walks involved walking alongside the three nearby rivers – the Rawthey, Lune and Dee. A few of us, wishing to stay out in the fells for longer or perhaps rekindling our youthful energy, extended the walks a little, several visiting Cautley Spout, England's highest above-ground waterfall.

The wettest day was our last walking day, no doubt a day which will live in the memory for Graham (Jnr), Chris and Dave, who with great tenacity and patience, rescued a Swaledale sheep whose horns were entangled in a wire fence. Rescue completed, the three were applauded by us all, though the freed sheep didn't stay around to thank them!

On this final day we did a ten mile there-and-back walk to visit the Cross Keys Temperance Inn, whose owner was able to offer us both a warm room and cream teas, followed by a talk about the history of the four-centuries-old building and a tragic event leading to the inn discontinuing the sale of alcohol. Back to the present, we look forward to next year's holiday at Malham, having already taken advantage of the special deals that HF Holidays have offered us.

Rik Leedale, Beverley group

