

Ramblers Sheffield 40's Walking Group

Minutes of Annual General Meeting by Zoom

November 26th 2020

7.30pm

Present – Committee – Chair – Wayne Grounell. Secretary/Membership Secretary – Bev Kenyon. Treasurer – Tony Smith. Socials and Weekends Away Coordinator – Tracey Lyne. Walks Coordinators – Mick Nott and Sara Collin. Web Editor – Jez Kenyon.

21 other Group Members also present

Apologies: Dave Depledge, James Scott, Sue Killeen, Godfrey Francis, Martin Wistow

Chair welcomed all to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1. Minutes of last year's AGM of November 14th 2019 - Proposed by Jim Conibear as a true record of the meeting and seconded by Rachel Von Gravitz. All present agreed.

2. Matters arising not on the agenda - none

3. Chairman's Report – Wayne opened by remembering all the good times from before all the Covid-19 restrictions, which we have hopefully not forgotten. We had some fantastic walks, socials and weekends away. In January the Area AGM was hosted by the Sheffield 20s and 30s group at the Victoria Church in Stafford Road. This was a successful meeting which started off with a walk round Norfolk Park and at which a letter was read out from Lord Blunkett. A motion to promote closer working ties between our groups and affiliated groups was taken to national council. This will help to give us a louder voice. Our affiliated groups include Council for the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Open Spaces Society amongst others.

It was also decided that the Sheffield Country Walk Booklet will be reprinted and our very own Peter Robinson has re walked the Country Walk and has many new insights to be included in this reprint.

Wayne welcomed the Chesterfield 20s and 30s who have joined our group over the Lockdown period and hopes to meet them in person at a future social event. Wayne thanked Tony Smith who is standing down as Treasurer after a year and Tracey Lyne who is standing down as Socials and Weekends Away Coordinator after 5 years. Wayne will also be standing down as Chair after 5 years and wishes all the group many good times in the future.

Questions

Tony Smith welcomed Peter Hubbard who is from the Chesterfield 20s and 30s group.

Jim Conibear mentioned a section of path near Strines, which is part of the Sheffield Country Walk and which is currently in a bad state of repair. It is a popular section of the walk. Sara Collin said that it has been reported to the main committee.

4. Treasurer's Report - Tony presented the accounts of the group for the year ending 30th September 2020

In accordance with Ramblers policy our group accounting is split into two "funding" types – Main and Self-funded.

'Main' funds are for running a programme to promote walking and supporting the Ramblers charitable objectives.

'Self-funded' funds are for socials and weekends away.

These 2 types of funding are operated from one bank account.

See the Treasurers report for details.

Bank Account Summary

Year	Main	Self-Funded	Total
Closing Balance 30 Sept 2019	921.13	501.41	1422.54
2019/20 Surplus / Deficit	229.02	-354.83	-125.81
Closing balance 30 Sept 2020	1150.15	146.58	1296.73

In summary, this year, the group balance now stands at **£1296.73**; £125.81 less than at the end of last year.

Main Funds

The chief source of income for our main account is annual funding allocation from the Ramblers Association.

The funding allocation is calculated as follows:

(Number of members x £1.01) + £95 (standard group allocation)

The sole income this year was this annual funding allocation of £343.46.

Expenditure this year consists of:

- 1) £95.84 on the website
- 2) £18.60 on gifts for retiring committee.

This leaves a surplus of £229.02. Our main funds balance is therefore higher than last year; **£1150.15**.

Self-funded

We as a group are allowed by the Ramblers Association to hold an amount in self-funded part of the account to pay for any required deposits for upcoming events and weekends away. The Ramblers Association, require self-funded events to be 'cost neutral' i.e. they should break even.

The aim therefore is to make a small surplus or be cost neutral. However sometimes it is difficult to predict what the take up will be when the group puts on events and weekends away after the events have been costed, and sometimes there are unforeseen costs; both of which can lead to a loss being made on a certain event.

Due to COVID, only 3 events took place this financial year which were Self-funded; 2 socials and 1 weekend away.

Breakdown:

Event	Receipts	Payments	Surplus / Loss
Xmas Meal	1043.42	1034.65	8.77
Xmas Party	672.00	655.00	17.00
Whitby Holiday	900.00	1280.60	-380.60

Small profits were made on both socials, and a loss was made on the Whitby holiday.

This leaves a deficit of £354.83. Our 'self-funded' funds balance is lower than last year; **£146**.

The accounts have been signed off by Gavin Johns, the Area Treasurer.

Questions

Jim Conibear noted that the overall loss on socials was not as great as it looks as we had a surplus last year. Tracey responded by saying that the loss was as a result of a mistake on the booking and so could not be passed onto the participants of the weekend. The socials committee agreed that the cost should be covered by the socials fund.

[Note: Following this discussion a check was done into the crossover between 2018/19 and 2019/20 accounts and a small adjustment was made. The published Treasurers report includes this.]

Tony made several suggestions as to how our surplus in the main fund could be spent eg. providing expenses and reimbursements for walk leaders doing reces and members attending national meetings and donations to Mountain Rescue. Bev asked if we could discuss some of these at a future committee meeting. Unfortunately, though, as a charity ourselves we are not allowed to donate to other charities from group funds.

5. Secretary's Report – Bev thanked the committee and Wayne, Tracey and Tony for all their hard work this year and said that It has been a pleasure once again to be in post over this last year. Our current membership stands at 252 (255 if you include 3 members whose membership renewal has only just lapsed). The new electronic membership system is now fully operational. It can be very informative, and glitches continue to be ironed out, so it is working much better than last year.

Over the first lockdown period we welcomed 13 members from the Chesterfield 20s and 30s group and we look forward to meeting them on walks and at a future social event.

We continue to see new faces on walks, and we are accepting new members every month and did so even over the Lockdowns.

Some statistics.

Gender split – similar to last year with 54% female, 45% male and still 1% unknown. Last year was 2%... 22% of our members are registered volunteers with Ramblers,

- Average age – 14% of our members are in their 40s and our average age is over 50
- Retention rate 95.8% - which is higher than last year's 90%
- Email addresses – there are still some problems with email addresses not working and 21 members have not provided an email address – web site continues to be particularly important.
- Sheffield area – 173 of our members have a Sheffield address and we have members as far away as Hertfordshire – I am querying that one – and Warwick. Other areas include Nottingham, Stoke-On-Trent and Holmfirth.

Leavers and Joiners breakdown – I've done my best with these numbers and am aware they don't quite add up however with some give and take either way as I do not think it includes movers – I have added in the members who moved from the Chesterfield group.

From October 2019 – March 2020 we had a total of 11 new members and 24 leaving.

Between March and May 2020, we had a total of 4 new members and 15 leaving.

Between June and October 2020 we had 33 new members and 24 leaving.

Questions – none

6. Walk Co-ordinator's Report - Our previous AGM was on 14 Nov 2019 and we started compiling the group's walk data from Sat 16 Nov 2019. It's been a year split in two by Covid lockdowns and we have accounted for two continuous spells of group walking. The first spell is from Sat 16 Nov 2019 until Sun 15 Mar 2020; all group walks were cancelled from Fri 20 Mar.

The second spell is from Wed 1 Jul 2020 when we were allowed to walk in groups until Thu 5 Nov 2020 when all group walks were cancelled again. The group size was restricted to a maximum of 6 from 1 July until 31 July when, subject to the walk leaders' discretion, a group on a Ramblers walk could be a maximum of 30. Restrictions by area tiers were applied from 1 October 2020 and this also affected our walks programme.

Walks data for walks from Sat 16 Nov 2019 to Fri 20 Mar 2020

18 weekends (incl the weekends around 'Xmas/NY Break').

Notional 36 days walking and 54 walks (if 3 walks per weekend is the 'norm')

4 Saturdays with no walks (incl one cancelled walk)

6 Sundays with 1 walk only, plus 2 Sunday walks cancelled with bad weather

2 walks offered on a Wednesday to celebrate Bradfield Ancient Ways Launch

47 walks offered, 1 A, 1 B, and 1 C walk cancelled

44 walks took place, 15 A walks, 16 B walks, 13 C walks.

40 walk reports rec'd (91% return). 7 reported incidents (eg falls, tired walkers) walk leaders ensured ppl concerned were OK and if necessary phoned ppl concerned the next day. No need to report incidents to Ramblers HQ.

547 attendances (incl walk leaders) on 40 walks reported
Average and median 14 (ie half the walks had 14 or more walkers, and average attendance was 14)
Max 33 (on an A1 walk) Min 1 (on an A2 walk, the walk leader did it anyway!)
19 walk leaders led 44 walks.
6 leaders led 1 walk each, 7 leaders led 2 walks each, 2 leaders led 3 walks each, 2 leaders led 4 walks each, and 1 leader led 5 walks.

Walks data for walks Wed 1 Jul 2020 to Thu 5 Nov 2020

Most walks were at weekends but we have had 1 day-walk on a Friday, 1 evening walk on (another) Friday and 3 Wednesday evening walks. The rest took place on Sats and Suns; 1 Sun walk took place at Bempton on the N Yorks coast.

The group has offered 52 walks in the 18 weeks since we could start walking again on Wed 1 Jul. This is just under 3 walks per week during the pandemic and a higher rate than before the restrictions were applied.

52 walks offered, 1 B walk cancelled because of bad weather and 1 C walk cancelled because of introduction of area tiers.

50 walks took place, 20 A walks, 24 B walks, 6 C walks.

49 walk reports rec'd (98% return). 1 reported incident (ie a fall, slight cut, broken glasses and a bit shaken, finished the walk) Walk leader and Walk Programme coordinator ensured ppl concerned were OK and phoned person concerned the next day to check they were OK. No need to report incident to Ramblers HQ.

448 attendances (incl walk leaders) on 49 walks reported.

Median 5 (up to Thu 30 Jul, ie half the walks reported had =>5 walkers; max allowed 6) Median 12 from Sat 1 August; numbers subject to walk leaders' discretion, max allowed 30.

Max 21 (on a B2 walk) Min 3 (on a B2 walk)

14 walk leaders led 49 walks

4 WLs led 1 walk each, 5 WLs led two walks each, 1 WL led 4 walks, 1 WL led 6 walks, 1 WL led 8 walks and 1 WL led 14(!) walks.

Questions - none

7. Social and Weekends Away Co-ordinator's Report - We have had a funny year this year, but we have tried to keep going. Before all the issues, we had quite a varied calendar planned for the year.

Events

Since the last AGM we managed to get a few events done. We had two fantastic events at Christmas, Sunday 15th Dec we did two walks before (Keef did a 5 miles, and Paul T did an 11 miles) we had a great sit down meal at 'The White Lion' which was well attended (full). The second event was a boogie at the Showroom on Paternoster row, with food and a bar, where we danced till late.

We had a meal at a the Qashqai Persian restaurant, organised by Colin, which was well attended. Also, in February we had the Beer and music festival in Rotherham which was advertised for the first

time this year. We also had a new members night at the Grapes on the 6th March. Which was our last event before Lockdown.

The only other event that was on the calendar that had to be cancelled was the night of Ballet organised by Jillian in May.

Weekends away

We had a great weekend at Whitby 29th Dec to 2nd Jan, for the New year. Whitby did us proud with a Firework display of the pier at midnight. Was a great weekend, lovely walks everyday organised by Wayne. The house (Hanover Cottage) was lovely, and the company was great. The only problem was with my counting, I had made an error and did not realise I had over booked till we had paid the final bill in November, when they send you the full address and other essential details, and I realised my mistake. It was too late to cancel anyone, so I booked another accommodation, which at the last minute, there was not much available, and Wayne and I stayed in this, so we ended up in deficit for this event.

Madeira week away in March was organised by Ze, this was full and everyone who went enjoyed it, but this was the beginning of lockdown, so they had a few days of worry that they would have trouble getting home, but it all worked out ok.

Then we had to cancel the other weekends away we had organised, which was Keswick mountain festival in May organised by Jillian. Pitlochry in August organised by Mandy and Jillian, also Edinburgh which was in October organised by Dave and Jillian.

I would like to give thanks to everyone on the social group who has helped me over the last few years, they have been essential part of my role and I could not have done it without them, we had regular meetings in the Fat Cat where we bounced ideas of each other, then someone would volunteer to organise the event or weekend away.

So, thanks to Jean, Lynn, Bev, Jillian, Colin, Mandy. I have enjoyed organising events for the group, but the new Social and Weekends away coordinator will have loads of ideas when we can start organising events again.

Questions – Jillian Gilbert thanked Tracey for all her hard work in an incredibly challenging job.

9. Web Editor's Report - Firstly on the website - it continues to function OK, and apart from a few tweaks here and there, its unchanged from last year. The web forms are used to input walks and socials, and provide a relatively quick and easy way to manage the site.

Footpath work is the main thing I have spent a lot of time on, and in particular the path warden system, for Sheffield walking groups to use. This has now resulted in 125 path issues being reported. At least 16 of those have been resolved, mainly broken stiles. Sheffield ROW had originally asked only to be sent the highest priority issues, due to lack of resource, but they have recently asked that we send everything along to them, as it is helpful for them to build up a picture, to make the case for more funding, which is excellent news.

Of the 125 problems reported in the last year or so, a special thanks to Jim, Mandy and Dennis, for collectively reporting over half of those!

Sheffield ROW are also wanting assistance checking the 'definitive maps' - a project that I am working with them to create a system for doing this - basically using spreadsheets and online scans of documents - to verify these. This will be a major step forwards to having the accurate maps available, which will help with path work going forwards.

We are looking to have a permanent footpath officer to help with these sorts of things - initially it will be about working with the 20 or so volunteers who have been gathering path reports (of which some may need help, but Covid has prevented that). Further ahead it is up to that officer how much they get involved - it is a collaboration with the other Sheffield groups - and as we are now the more techy group, with people starting to have time available, we need to continue the work that has previously been done entirely by the older Sheffield group.

If anyone is interested in finding out a bit more about the role, please contact the committee.

Questions - none

9. Nominations - the following were the only nominations received by the close of nominations and are therefore deemed elected, and were ratified at the AGM.

Chairman – Jez Kenyon – proposed Mick Nott – seconded Sara Collin

Social & Weekends Away Co-ordinator – Gillian Gilbert and Mandy Kippax – proposed David Deplege – seconded Dennis Crossland

Treasurer – Mick Nott – proposed Dave Depledge – seconded Sara Collin

Walks Co-ordinator – Dave Depledge – proposed Mick Nott – seconded Jillian Gilbert

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Secretary – Bev Kenyon – proposed Jez Kenyon – seconded Julie Sweeting.

Web Editor – Vacancy – Allen Hudson signalled an interest in the role.

10. Motions for discussion and consideration, previously notified - none

11. General Discussion – There was a general discussion about the main fund and how to spend it. Jim Conibear is in favour of donations where possible and reimbursements for walk leaders. Jillian Gilbert said that she feels it should be the walk leaders' choice as to whether they would like reimbursing or not. Jean Billingham said that she feels the money should be used in projects close to home rather than going to Ramblers however Tony said that if we have over a certain amount of money in the account then we do not get that year allocation from Ramblers so effectively it goes to Ramblers at that point. Mandy Kippax and Sara Collin mentioned a walk that Mountain Rescue puts on annually under normal conditions which people can join at a cost which is for charity. Jim Conibear asked if we can spend it on way markers and path improvements as the group would also gain some publicity from this.

Jim Conibear thanked the committee and the retiring committee for all their hard work.

Sara Collin mentioned that Ramblers will allow walks programmes to recommence on 3rd December and walk numbers and tiers were discussed.

Jez Kenyon thanked the outgoing Chair.

14. Close of Meeting - the meeting closed at 9.15