

Minutes of meeting on 3 Dec, at the Red Deer, 6.30 pm

Present: Sue Killeen, Raj Joshi, Mike, Jez, Jean, Lynn, Dennis, Mandy. Apologies Jill, Alan.

Raj presented 2 docs - vision and governance

### **Vision Proposals**

We went through the Vision Proposals section by section.

Walking is good - all agreed

- Access - legislation may affect the vision in the future
- Having a footpaths officer is good - not easy but important
- experience outdoors on foot - where would training come from? Do leaders need training?
- walking for health - they want many more groups but then seem to control them. Sue mentioned existing system. They gave up and formed their own group. Mike mentioned enjoyment should be our aim. Raj said vision statement needs to be broad. Jez mentioned finances. Health is a source of income for Ramblers. We need to think about the experience of new members.
- benefits of walking - generally no disagreements
- training for leaders - is it necessary - will we be forced? Should it be a system of making it accessible which people will find beneficial. Ramblers do offer training.
- Sue raised the issue of young members. Ramblers don't offer any separate groups for young people.

### **Governance Proposals**

Membership - in decline - in conflict with vision - why? Is it a trend overall? But walking is growing overall. Politically there has been a change in how people see access.

Ramblers started as a federation but was not set up like that when Ramblers Association was formed. How should it evolve?

What is putting people off? Why are they forming independent groups? The group constitution was discussed - is it going? What does the group agreement mean? Why have it?

Page 3, Para 3 - discussed already. Independence - can mean no help given - but converse is control? We should be allowed to develop as a group to take up the issues we feel are important. Groups should communicate their own issues so other groups can join in. Eg access issues are fluid.

Page 3, Para 4 - Leadership is important and should be transparent.

Page 3, Para 7 - there is no visibility. Who are we voting for? Is voting system fair? Delegate

system protects us from vote swinging. Engagement from members is important for democracy. Jez made the point that the delegate system avoids some of the need for individual members to know enough to vote for the people running Ramblers.

Page 3, Para 7 - our priorities are walking and or socials. We should ask people what they want to do. Some groups do not socialise at all. We need to decide what we want. Footpaths, walking, socialising and access. Should area control who does what?

Page 3, Para 10 - Consultation? Did it take place? Surveys took place but very ad hoc. Chair gets communications to pass on but there will be a new way directly to members. Dennis queried communication of proposals and that people were finding out about the proposals very late. Not many members know about them. Can we communicate this to RA?

Page 4 - group agreement. Currently post code determines group joined or members choose a single group. Instead members will be able to join more than one group depending on what they want from each group.

Future communications - how best to get info out. Website? As Chesterfield group. What is minimum number for new groups?

We like the idea we can choose our mission. Someone said that when they tried to get involved in footpath work they felt excluded by another group, as it was 'their thing'. Jez suggests it is directed by an area footpath group, to avoid ownership by specific walking groups, and communication about different activities should be communicated to all groups.

Should areas all have a standard website? Should we have a section about area activities on our site? Maybe a panel on the home page?

Group agreement - needs more detail. Discussion of whether groups will retain independence. Agreement can change? Will members have a say in changes to agreement? We need to find out what it actually means. With a constitution we don't need to worry about changes. Group agreement "invariable" but they want "flexibility"?

Currently we vote for own group committee. What will multi membership mean?

Will we be able to continue as we are? Will agreement be broad? Why do they want to get rid of constitution? There are flexi groups already. Do they want this structure for all groups?

Selecting people to stand for BoT is difficult as we don't know who they are. Delegate system is a way to avoid this problem - we vote for the next level up and that cascades upwards, on basis that the next level up choose people from among themselves to represent at level above etc.

Meeting finished 8.30.