

Ramblers – York Group (EY&D Area)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Poppleton Tithe Barn at 1.30pm on Wednesday 12th November, 2025

MINUTES (DRAFT)

43 members in attendance

1. Chairman's opening remarks (Ian Reavill)

The Chair welcomed everyone, with an especially warm welcome to Sam Borman, Temporary Acting Chair and Treasurer of East Yorkshire and Derwent Area Ramblers Association. He noted the very good attendance and went on to say:

"Another very active year - all made possible by the efforts of the committee, who do an amazing job. I keep reminding myself they are all volunteers. We are indebted to Tony and Paul, as secretary and treasurer, and to Viv for standing in as secretary while Tony was away. All the walking sections are flourishing, and providing a walk every week, or however often they operate. Thanks to the section organisers, and to the members of each section who lead walks. Unfortunately, it is becoming harder to find walk leaders, which means that those of us who do lead are being asked to do more. This situation is becoming harder with the new Central Office regulations which state that from January, walks can only be led by members who have completed the online training course or led 12 walks in the past three years. We shall be discussing this later.

One of our other activities which must be mentioned is the footpath surveys, which many of us undertake every year. Thanks to Steve Hoather for pulling this together, and reminding us to get it done. It's a vital part of our group activities, which sets us apart from other walking groups. Thanks also to David Nunns and his small team who look at access and planning issues which could affect rights of way. It's sad that Doreen Felton is retiring from the group after many years. I know David would welcome new members. As well as organising the Wednesday walks, Mike Norman does a great job keeping the website up to date, but thanks also to Tom Halstead for keeping an eye on it and making changes when requested. One unsung hero is Eric Smith, who in spite of serious health problems, has continued to welcome new members and send emails and newsletters to all members."

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Brian Taylor, Steve Owen, Linda Gall and Nigel Burchell.
3. **Minutes of the last AGM**, held on Wednesday 13th November 2024 at the Tithe Barn, Poppleton, were approved.
4. **Matters arising** – none.

5. **Group Secretary's report (Tony Tew)**

Drawn from the minutes of the three committee meetings we have held since the last AGM, our thanks go once again to Anne Parker who stepped down last year from being newsletter editor. This year we have been relying mostly on email and our website for both communicating with members and non-members. Generally this appears to be working well. The committee recently reviewed our use of social media (we do have a Facebook page with some interesting entries, but it principally directs folk to our website). Nice though an increased social media presence would be, we currently do not have the capacity to set up and maintain extra channels of communication. Any volunteers?

A highlight every year is our coach ramble. Three great linear guided walks were offered again this year (thank you to all involved), each with a different length and grade of difficulty and all converging on the beautiful village of Kettlewell. Booking was mostly done electronically, but thank you to our walks coordinators for printing paper copies for members without email or internet. 44 walkers took advantage of this opportunity to walk slightly further afield than most of our weekly walks allow. At £16 per person, the event just covered its costs. Suggestions for where we might walk next year, with possible routes, will be gratefully received.

Still on the theme of communication, some of our walking groups have been informally communicating with their regular members for years, and the committee has decided to put this on a slightly more formal footing. Walks coordinators will be encouraged to maintain a contact list which meets data protection regulations. Not only useful for urgent messages about a walk, e.g. a last minute change, the list could also serve to help us stay in touch with members who are not well enough to get out. For some groups, a WhatsApp account for their members might be appropriate too.

Finally, a reminder that Ramblers members benefit from store discounts. Currently, Cotswold Outdoors offers a 15% discount and Mountain Warehouse often inserts a discount voucher in The Ramblers' Walk Magazine. So do watch

out for those and tell your friends that they might not only be better off health-wise by joining The Ramblers but financially better off too!

6. Treasurer's report (Paul Shepherd)

(Please see Appendices I and II.)

7. Webmaster's report (Tom Halstead & Mike Norman)

Mike Norman reported that our website is working well. It has received 30,000 unique visits in the last year and one million hits in total.

Tom Halstead also stated that our website, which is hosted by Ramblers-Webs, continues to function smoothly. Ramblers-Webs currently supports about 300 Group and Area Web Sites. The account is run by Ramblers volunteers and funded by Central Office. A small group of volunteers act as overall Administrators, who are always ready to help should we have any problems. During the past month, the site received on average 113 page views each day, 81 unique visits and 70 first-time visits. The most visited pages this month have been the Walks Programme and the annual trip to Derwent Bank 2025.

Tom also expressed his thanks to Mike Norman for managing the records of all our walks, which is the most demanding website task.

8. Membership Secretary's report (Eric Smith)

York Ramblers membership stands at 427 plus three affiliate members. Last year we had 427 members and 1 affiliate. These are surprisingly stable figures, especially considering that we have had 31 new members and 2 affiliate additions over the last 12 months. Eric observed that leavers are mostly fairly new members either resigning or simply letting their memberships lapse.

9. Footpath Secretary's report (David Nunns)

For nearly two decades, Vera Silberberg served as the York Ramblers group secretary, a role she held until 2016, after which she became a member of the Footpath Sub-Committee. With Vera's tragic passing and Doreen leaving the group, only David and Nick remain. David emphasised that it is not necessary to be physically active to do the job and he appealed for anyone who is interested to approach him for further information. *(Please see Appendix III for David's report.)*

10. Parish Footpath Monitor's report (Steve Hoather)

Steve began by explaining that he organises volunteers to walk all paths in our area once a year, (a) to identify any paths which have problems that need to be fixed, (b) so that it is obvious from the long list of outstanding work that council funding continues to be needed. There are 84 parishes (or groups of parishes)

in the York RA area, and of these 72 were reported as surveyed during the 2024 calendar year, with a further three surveyed in part.

So far this year, 49 parishes have been reported as surveyed. Outstanding ones were chased up at the beginning of October, and reports are still coming in - the deadline is the middle of January.

At present we are short of volunteers for six parishes - Yearsley, Brandsby, Marton, Stillington, Coxwold, and Newburgh, and more will probably arise when the final round-up is done in January.

Ian added that it's a satisfying job when you re-walk paths the following year and see that the problems you reported have been repaired.

11. Walk Secretaries' reports:

a) Tuesday Group (Anne Kennedy)

First of all, can I record my thanks in particular to Linda Gall and Mike Norman, who helped me into my role of secretary for the Tuesday group with their advice and technical assistance. Can I also thank those who have offered to lead walks for the group in the last 12 months, and to Ian Reavill for his support and encouragement.

Thanks to everyone who's led in the last year. Since the last AGM, the Tuesday group have had a full programme of fortnightly walks. There have been 26 walks with a total of 335 walkers, giving an average attendance of 13. The highest number was 22 for the daffodil walk at Farndale in April. There have been 15 different walk leaders, including two new ones. We have attracted 13 visitors and two went on to join the Ramblers. The group have walked on the North York moors, the Wolds and the Howardian Hills, and we had one walk in the Yorkshire Dales. Tibthorpe, Low Catton and Whixley were new venues for our programme.

So far ten of this year's leaders have completed walk leader training or are eligible by virtue of the number of walks led in the past 3 years.

A concern has been a decrease in the average numbers attending (17 down to 13), although this has stabilised and most of us are leaders, so that the Tuesday group should be able to provide a full and varied programme of walks in 2026.

b) Wednesday Ramblers Group (Mike Norman)

Since last year's AGM, we have had 48 walks totalling 1014 participants. Our average is 22 walkers per walk, with three walks having over 30 taking part and more with numbers in the high 20s. Our most popular destinations were Fridaythorpe, Helmsley and Leavening Brow. Local walks attract more participants due to the shorter distances and shorter travelling times involved. We had one completely new destination for us when we walked in the Cannon Hall parklands and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. New walkers have tried us this year and gone on to join the Ramblers and are now regular participants. We have had 16 different leaders so far this year, some of whom have led multiple walks. Thanks to all our leaders and walkers for making it so enjoyable, without them our programme would not be possible.

c) Wednesday Ambles Group (Judith Tosh)

Judith reported that since the last AGM there had been 49 Wednesday Ambles of between six and eight miles in length. She thanked the volunteer walk leaders for their time and effort in planning and doing a recce of their walks. There had been an average of 16 amblers on the walks, with numbers varying, depending on location, weather and distance from York.

Judith expressed her thanks to John Cocker and Harry McKniff for helping put together a programme of walks and passing on necessary information at the beginning of Ambles. Judith said that she will be standing down as coordinator at the end of December.

Ian thanked Judith for her service to the Ambles Group over the years. He presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation which noted Judith's many skills in both leading walks since 2009 and coordinating Ambles since 2012. Her cheerful contributions on the Committee will be missed.

d) Thursday Evening Walks (Stephanie Windsor)

In spite of emails to members, there was little take up to lead evening walks this year. Many thanks to Debby Cobbett for her generous offers to lead walks on Thursday evenings. Debby offered walks in May (ten walkers), June (five), July (none), and August (one). Thank you to Sylvia Fishwick, who also led a walk. In conclusion; 2023 was the most successful year, perhaps due to the recent relaxation of Covid restrictions.

e) Friday Walks (Debby Cobbett)

Debby explained that she had set up the Friday Walks in response to requests by some for slightly shorter walks. They involve public transport and are about six or seven miles in length. Debby is thoroughly enjoying coordinating

them. She thanked everyone who has been involved. Now in their second year and after 13 walks, attendances usually lie between six and ten. Walks further afield have included Knaresborough and Sheffield, but they have also walked closer to home, e.g. from Rufforth to Acomb, Wheldrake to Escrick, Haxby to Blue Bridge and several more. So far, they are not running out of ideas for new routes.

f) **Saturday Public Transport Walks (Annette Bond & Anne Cornford)**

The group is still flourishing thanks to our leaders. We have offered 50 walks since the last AGM, ranging in distance from seven to 14 miles. A group of us are doing the Kirklees and Calderdale Ways. Other destinations have included Grassington, Ripon, Ilkley, the Wolds and the coast, to name just a few. Group numbers have ranged from five to 25. Ken Wright arranged a weekend break in Betws-y-Coed in June and Alistair Bloom arranged an 11-day holiday in San Martino in the Dolomites in September, where we had eight days of beautiful walks. Our annual lunch was held on 18th January at The Guy Fawkes Arms in Scotton, following a walk from Knaresborough.

g) **Sunday Walks (Stephanie Windsor)**

One Sunday Lunch walk has been held in the last year, led by Paul Shepherd. There were 12 for the lunch and 17 on the walk, including three new walkers and two from Pocklington Ramblers.

At this point, Stephanie, in her capacity as Social Secretary, took the opportunity to mention that the York Ramblers Christmas Lunch was held last year at Cosy Club in Fossgate. The event had gone well, but a new venue is planned for this year (The Chopping Block at Walmgate Ale House). Stephanie would welcome suggestions for other social activities.

12. Nominations, Elections and Vacancies to York Ramblers Group Committee

<i>Chairman:</i> Ian Reavill	<i>Secretary:</i> Tony Tew
<i>Treasurer:</i> Paul Shepherd	<i>Membership Secretary:</i> Eric Smith
<i>Tuesday Group Organiser:</i> Anne Kennedy	<i>Wednesday Ambles Organiser:</i> Judith Tosh (stepping down - Vacancy)
<i>Wednesday Rambles Organiser:</i> Mike Norman	<i>Thursday Evening Walks Organisers:</i> Stephanie Windsor
<i>Friday Walks Organiser:</i> Debby Cobbett	<i>Saturday Public Transport Group Organisers:</i> Anne Cornford & Annette Bond
<i>Sunday Walks Organiser:</i> Stephanie Windsor	<i>Social Secretary:</i> Stephanie Windsor
<i>Paths Secretary:</i> David Nunns	<i>Parish Footpaths Monitor:</i> Steve Hoather
<i>Webmaster:</i> Tom Halstead	<i>Website Editor:</i> Mike Norman
<i>Committee Member:</i> Vivienne Taylor	<i>Publicity Officer:</i> Vacancy

The Chair agreed to continue for another year (prop. Tony Tew, sec. Steve Hoather) and was duly re-elected *nem. con.* The rest of the committee were willing to continue and were re-elected en bloc *nem. con.* (prop. Keith Pammenter, sec. Sam Borman).

13. The future of the Wednesday Ambles Group

At the committee meeting on 14th October 2025, Judith Tosh formally announced that she would be stepping down from her role as Coordinator for the Ambles Group. Judith announced to the meeting that Lynn Dickie was willing to take her place. Lynn was elected into post *nem. con.* (prop. Judith, sec. John Cocker). The Chair thanked Lynn warmly and welcomed her onto the Committee.

14. Walk Leader training

Mike Norman reported great success in getting leaders to re-register under the new system. He said that we have 58 qualified leaders, some of whom are

members elsewhere, but also occasionally lead for York. Several more are in the process of doing the training. We have 29 leaders listed as not yet qualified, however some of these are no longer active and we are in the process of identifying who should be removed from the list [these revised details were provided on 15/11/2025].

Ian urged section leaders to encourage their members to undertake the training. Mike Norman, speaking for the section leaders, said they are helping with this in any way possible. Having undertaken the online training himself, Ian felt it was reasonable and helpful, even for experienced walkers. He reminded the meeting that folk who have led at least 12 walks in the last three years, or who have a Mountain Leader qualification or similar could 'self-certificate' and do not have to do the online training. Ian emphasised that without a body of qualified leaders it will be very hard to fill the walks programmes and it is a serious issue. 26 paper copies of The Walk Leader Handbook, summarising The Ramblers' approach to group walks are available (obtainable from the Secretary).

15. Future Plans

Despite the challenges, Ian said he is hopeful that we will manage to offer the same number of walks as last year. He invited suggestions for how we might make improvements to the way we operate. Ian said that he particularly likes the way in which our coach ramble involves all sections and he repeated the invitation for members to suggest a set of walks for next year's coach ramble.

Debby Cobbett expressed her enthusiasm for York Ramblers to be involved in next year's York Walking Festival and York Environment Festival. Both events will be inviting contributions and she felt that they will be good ways to attract new members. With regards to attracting new members, Ian mentioned that a forthcoming edition of the York Local Link magazine will include an article about York Ramblers.

16. Any Other Business

Rydale Ramblers Group

Ian Gibbs, many years a York Rambler and committee member, said that he was here today on behalf of the Rydale Group. He particularly wanted to acknowledge that of 45 walks offered by Rydale in the past year, 21 were led by York members, to whom he was very grateful. Ian G also noted that of the 24 walks led by a Ryedale member, 16 were led by just three individuals (*a full breakdown of last year's figures is in Appendix IV*).

He said the loss of leaders would not be so bad if other members who have not led in the past would offer to do the on-line training and, with support, be willing to lead in the future. Sadly, this has not happened.

On a positive note, he said how extremely fortunate we are to live in a beautiful part of the country and the Rydale walks that did take place were much enjoyed. He thanked the leaders who made this possible.

Tea and Cakes were served after the meeting

Appendix I

TREASURER'S REPORT from Paul Shepherd For the Financial Year 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025

We started the financial year with a balance in the Bank of £1,014.16. This was made up of £785.54 in the Main Fund and £228.62 relating to Self-Funded Activities.

During the year, receipts into the Main Fund comprised £534.90, being 100% of our Basic Funding Allocation from Central Office, an increase on the previous year of £32.87 due to higher membership of 12 people plus 5p per member more from Central Office, and a donation of £250.00 from RWH Travel Ltd. Payments included £196.00 for last year's AGM and £49.50 reimbursements for Recce Travel Expenses.

Receipts for Self-Funded Activities comprised those for the June 2025 Coach Ramble and the rest of those for the 2024 Christmas Meal. Payments included those for the June 2024 Coach Ramble as well as the balance for the 2024 Christmas Meal. The 2025 Coach Ramble resulted in a surplus and the 2024 Christmas Meal in a small surplus. The Committee are considering options to reduce the balance on Self-Funded Activities to a level more in line with Central Office recommendations.

The closing Bank balance was £1,897.97 of which £1,294.15 related to the Main Fund and £603.82 to Self-Funded Activities.

Other Financial Matters

First Aid Training

Information was received from Central Office in July 2025, via the Area Treasurer, that the Group's Basic Funding Allocation could once again be used to fund face-to-face First Aid Training Courses. The Committee agreed to accept 100% of the Basic Funding Allocation from Central Office for the 2024-25 Financial Year. As well as being used to pay for costs deemed to be in connection with The Ramblers Charitable objectives, such as those associated with the Annual AGM and pre walk recce travel expenses, funds have been allocated to cover a face-to-face First Aid Training Course, which is in the process of being arranged.

Volunteers' Expenses Policy

This Policy has been reviewed by the Committee and expanded to include other expense items. It is available on our website under the section headed 'Documents > Leader Expenses.' Walk Leaders were informed, via Walk Section Co-ordinators, by a letter from Ian Reavill. A copy is also available on our website under the same file path as the Policy.

Finally, but not least, thank you to Peter Atkinson for once again conducting the Independent Examination of the 2024-25 Annual Accounts.

Appendix II

ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025
as per extracts from the Annual Financial Return to The Ramblers Central Office

MAIN FUND

Receipts	Current Year £ p	Prior Year £ p	Payments	Current Year £ p	Prior Year £ p
From CO (funding)	0.00		To CO	0.00	
From CO (other)	0.00		To Area	0.00	
From Area (funding)	534.90	502.03	To Group (funding)	0.00	
From Area (other)	0.00		To Group (other)	0.00	
From Group	0.00		To S/W Council	0.00	
From S/W Council	0.00		Walks programmes	0.00	
T/fer from 'Self-funded'	0.00		Walks related	49.50	40.50
Donations	250.00	260.00	Walks leader training	0.00	
Legacies	0.00		Newsletters/publicity	0.00	
Grants	0.00		Publication/goods costs	0.00	
Fundraising	0.00		Campaigns/casework	28.99	28.99
Deposit interest	0.00		Practical work	0.00	
Investment income	0.00		Fundraising costs	0.00	
Publication/goods sales	0.00		Meetings (inc. AGM)	196.00	181.00
Advert sales	0.00		Admin	0.00	
Other	0.00		Other	1.80	1.80
Total receipts	784.90	762.03	Total payments	276.29	252.29

SELF-FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Receipts		Current Year £ p	Prior Year £ p	Payments		Current Year £ p	Prior Year £ p
Day walks		735.00	675.00	Day walks		605.00	660.00
Holidays		0.00		Holidays		0.00	
Socials		908.75	1,188.10	Socials		663.55	1,418.79
Deposit interest		0.00		T/fer to 'Main'		0.00	
Other		0.00		Other		0.00	
Total receipts		1,643.75	1,863.10	Total payments		1,268.55	2,078.79

S U M M A R Y

	Current Year			Prior Year		
	Main	Self-Funded	Total	Main	Self-Funded	Total
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Total receipts	784.90	1,643.75	2,428.65	762.03	1,863.10	2,625.13
Total payments	276.29	1,268.55	1,544.84	252.29	2,078.79	2,331.08
Surplus / (Deficit)	508.61	375.20	883.81	509.74	(215.69)	294.05
Operning Balance b/fwd	785.54	228.62	1014.16	275.80	444.31	720.11
Closing Balance c/fwd	1,294.15	603.82	1897.97	785.54	228.62	1,014.16

BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION AS AT 30th SEPT 2025

A/c no:	20129521	Institution:	Unity Trust Bank		
A/c name:	The Ramblers Association (ER7) York Group RCN 1093577		Balance per statement		1,897.97
Reconciling items:	Date	To/from		Ref no.	Amount
	Add receiptes not yet on Statement				
					Nil
Subtract payments not yet on Statement					Nil
		Balance per cashbook			1897.97

Appendix III

Footpath Secretary's Report from David Nunns (as reported on 14th October 2025)

The only correspondence from North Yorkshire Council was a proposal in July to close all 4 roads across Skipwith Common to all vehicles, not just motor vehicles, by Escrick Estate and YWT. This would probably also mean removing the ORPA designation on the OS maps, which would be a retrograde step for walkers, cyclists and blue badge holders. NYC have replaced or repaired about 6 bridges.

At Heworth Without, the Cow Moor Farm Bridleway has been diverted around the farm to a wider route through woodland.

At Skelton, Derek Jackson's claim for FP.11 from the village to Bur Tree Dam was confirmed by the Secretary of State and the Parish Council are in discussions for a link path to connect it to the A1237/A19. Derek believes he has new evidence to support his claim for FP.13, which is with the SoS.

At Dunnington, the Minster Way has been blocked by the local Agents for the Church Commissioners. Tony Corrigan emailed Ramblers members to support City Of York Council's proposal to add this path to the Definitive Map. The problem was caused by Dunnington Parish not including this link path between 2 Kexby Bridleways when producing the Definitive map and Ramblers assuming it to be a White Road. The Council have the matter in hand.

At Nether Poppleton, we agreed to FP.1 being diverted to the other side of the hedgerow to where a Solar Farm has been given planning permission.

I have copies of 3 Modification Orders that have been 'Sealed' by CYC:

Dunnington 28 Restricted Byway
Murton 14 / Holtby 8 Restricted Byway
Askham Richard 5 Footpath

There are 3 Objected Orders which are still with the SoS for Decisions:

Skelton 13, from August 2021.

Strensall 23, from March 2022, on the east bank of the Foss at Westpits.

York 244, from 2022, in front of Marlborough Villas, Fishergate.

Appendix IV

Ryedale Walk Coordinator's Report from Ian Gibbs

(see Item 16)

Period	Number of Sundays	Number of walks completed	Number led by Ryedale member	Number led by non-Ryedale member	Cancellations Other
Dec 2024	5	4	2	2	1
<i>Number of walkers</i>			16, 18	14, 20	
1 st Q. 2025	13	10	6	4	3
<i>Number of walkers</i>			18,14,9,19,18,10	24, 23, 14, 19	
2 nd Q. 2025	13	12	6	6	York coach ramble
<i>Number of walkers</i>			7,25,15,15,19,15	17,8,11,16,18,20	
3 rd Q. 2025	13	12	6	6	1
<i>Number of walkers</i>			15,6,15,9,19,19	6,26,16,12,12,11	
Oct 2025 to AGM 2025	8	7	4	3	Derwent Bank prep
<i>Number of walkers</i>			13,7,?,?	7,13,?	
Total	52	45	24*	21	5 'cancels' 2 'other'
			24/45 53.3%	21/45 46.7%	

* Note: Of the 24 walks led by a Ryedale member 16 were undertaken by just 3 Ryedale members