

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION - YORK GROUP

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 10th July 2023 at 2:00pm at Beech House, 49 Main Street, Escrick, York YO19 6LQ

Present: Ian Reavill (Chair), Tony Tew (Secretary), Carys Tew (deputy secretary), Paul Shepherd (Treasurer), Vivienne Taylor, Steve Hoather, David Nunns, Linda Gall, Judith Tosh, Mike Norman, Annette Bond, Ann Cornford, Stephanie Windsor

1/. Apologies for absence: Anne Parker, Tom Halstead

2/. Minutes of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 were approved.

3/. Matters arising: There were no matters arising.

4/. Committee: The Chair thanked the outgoing secretary for her enormous contribution in this role and welcomed the new secretary and deputy secretary, who were co-opted unanimously.

5/. Treasurers Report:

Paul Shepherd presented an update on the York Group finances (Appendix I). The new expenses policy is now due for completion by the next meeting. The basic central funding allocation for the York Group should suffice, since few people claim for travel expenses. Unfortunately, due to illness, Ann Allinson may be unavailable to audit the accounts in time for this year's AGM. **Action Paul** to approach Peter Atkinson about standing in if necessary.

BANK BALANCE

At the close of business on Friday 30th June 2023 the balance in our Bank Account stood at £814.25, which comprises the nett of £270.24 on the Main Fund plus £544.01 for Self-Funded Activities.

The balance on the Main Fund has been increased from £72.26 as at 28th February 2023 by £197.98. This has been as a result of drawing from Area 50% of our Basic Funding Allocation for this financial year (£272.22), plus the receipt of commission from RWH Ltd of £60, partly offset by payments including Travel Expenses claims (£22.50), deposit for hire of Poppleton Tithe Barn to hold our 2023 AGM and the annual subscription for the OS Mapping App (£28.99) in connection with the Parish Paths project.

The balance for Self-Funded Activities has increased from £513.31 as at 28th February 2023, by £31.70. This is mainly due to the modest surplus from the May Coach Ramble.

BASIC FUNDING ALLOCATION

For the 2022-23 Financial Year, Committee Members are reminded that there is still a further £272.22 (50%) available for us to draw from Area should it be needed.

For the 2023-24 Financial Year, Central Office have advised Area that we are entitled to a Basic Funding Allocation of £502.03 This is based on 403 members at £1.01 per member plus £95.

Sam Borman, the Area Treasurer, has indicated that he does not intend putting in the 2023- 24 Area Budget an amount to help cover extra travelling expenses for recces as he did for 2022-23. Groups should therefore submit a budget if they anticipate needing additional funds to their Basic Allocation for this or any other purpose that furthers the charitable aims of the Ramblers.

Given the reduced costs of producing and distributing a Newsletter electronically, as well as the low level of claims for recce travel expenses experienced to date, it is proposed to accept the Basic Funding Allocation and not to request additional funds.

6/. Membership:

Eric Smith reported that the membership currently stands at 406 members and 1 affiliate member. This figure is down from late February when there were 414 members and 1 affiliate. There have been 7 new members since 07/04/23. Three of the new members are listed as transferring from other groups, the others as new members of Ramblers. Eric will be welcoming them.

7/. Footpath sub-committee report and parish footpath report:

David Nunns – Footpath sub-committee. Draft minutes have been received from the FOOTPATH SUB-COMMITTEE held 23rd April 2023 (Appendix II). David reported that the Copmanthorpe level crossing work is still in limbo. York City Council is working on formalising footpaths and bridleways in the city, as many of them have not been officially classified.

Steve Hoather - Parish footpath monitoring agreed at the committee meeting on 7 March 2023 to take on this task from Simon Lyle, and the current position is as follows.

In the Ramblers York Group area there are 46 parishes in North Yorks County Council, 31 in City of York and 10 York wards, making a total of 87. Two of the wards do not have any footpaths, and the number of “Parishes” for monitoring purposes is therefore 85. It should be noted that a number of small parishes have been included in larger adjacent ones and these have been counted as one for this purpose.

On receiving the details from Simon, Steve contacted all the existing path monitors, and with very few exceptions all said they were willing to continue. One monitor (Brigid Holdsworth) could not be contacted as she appears to have changed her e-mail address, but as the record shows she did her 2 parishes in 2022 Steve is hopeful that she will continue.

About 18 parishes remain uncovered (some parishes have never had volunteers), but monitors have now been found for all of these.

The booklet ‘A guide to walking our Parish Paths and Bridleways’ has been re-issued to include the new reporting procedure for NYCC and distributed to all monitors.

To date Steve has received forms or confirmation that 6 parishes have been completed. He hopes to receive a lot more over the next 3 months, and around the end of September he will start chasing those which have not been reported. Steve acknowledged the invaluable work done by Lynn Croskin in setting up the scheme.

8/. Walking Groups & Future Plans

Ian began by thanking the public transport group for brilliantly organising the coach ramble, which was a huge success. He raised the question of whether to organise a second one for this Autumn. The general feeling was against doing this, but the decision would be reviewed if there are lots of requests for one.

Linda Gall – Tuesday Group reported that Tuesday walks continue on a fortnightly basis. Since 1st April there have been seven walks with a total of 106 walkers, averaging 15 per walk. Unfortunately, due to illness, three of the seven walk leaders were unable to lead. Their walks were covered by Linda and Andy. Linda is struggling to find enough walk leaders. **Action Ian** to raise the matter with the Wednesday group leaders to see if they can help share the load. Ian confirmed that, if cancellation is necessary, the procedure is to flag it on the website by 6pm the night before. It was noted that the app does not necessarily reflect these changes.

Judith Tosh – Amblers reported that they have had walks each week with an average of about 15 walkers. The next programme is coming together. Luckily people keep offering to lead! However, leading is falling to a small number of people.

Mike Norman – Wednesday Ramblers reported that between 4th January and 5th July there have been 27 walks involving a total of 623 walkers. The average number of walkers per walk was 23 and the highest number was 34 at Whitwell on 22nd March. The lowest was 15. 17 walks had over 20 walkers. Current walk numbers are strong with 27 on 5th July. There is no problem finding walk leaders. The programme is full to the end of August.

Annette Bond and Anne Cornford – Public Transport reported that between March and 1 July they offered 17 walks with an average of 13 walkers per walk. The group continues to flourish and next weekend a few of them are going to Kirkby Stephen Youth Hostel for a walking weekend. Again, their leaders have had to contend with rail strikes and bus cancellations and on one occasion the bus was too full, so the leader offered an alternative walk on that day. Annette and Anne are very grateful for all the hard work of the leaders. They have now started planning for the next three months.

Stephanie Windsor - Evening Walks – Stephany apologised for her lack of availability. She expressed thanks to Mike for stepping in and organising the walks. Mike reported that the walks are going well, typically with 10 – 12 walkers each. Walks start and end at a pub car park. The programme is full and walks will cease sometime in September due to the darker evenings.

9/. Area Council

An Area Council (AC) Meeting was held 23rd May 2023 and **Ian** reported back (see Appendix III for minutes).

AC is informing Central Office that, in their opinion, the on-line Walk Leaders Foundation Course is useful but should not be mandatory for new walk leaders in case it deters them from volunteering.

Following a complaint about a rambler inadvertently blocking access outside a house, AC is asking all group leaders to remind their members to park considerately.

The updated Walks Manager software is due to go live on 1st June. It will automatically display new walks entered in our area. **Mike** reported that the new website is working satisfactorily and teething problems are gradually being ironed out.

10/. Website / Newsletter

Tom Halstead sent his thanks to Mike Norman for putting up the records of Wednesday Walks and stated that these are the most visited pages. The site receives on average nearly 100 page views per day. A graph showing the latest visit statistic from statcounter.com is shown in Appendix IV.

Ian discussed running the newsletter at 2/year. A discussion followed on items to include in the next newsletter. These include a reminder of the need for parking considerably, a plea for more walk leaders, and mentioning the successful coach ramble (and that the next one will be next year). **Ian** will write an item about the parish paths. Following Mike and Hazel Willis' recent deaths, Hilary will write an obituary. Notice of the AGM would be included, and it was agreed there would be no speaker at the AGM this year. Instead, the two pre-AGM walks would be extended slightly. **Action Ian and Tony** to liaise with Anne Parker to get the next newsletter off the ground. **Action Tony** to enquire about video projection facilities at the AGM venue (Poppleton Tithe Barn) with a view to showing a video loop before the start of the AGM and using PowerPoint for the meeting itself.

11/- Coach Ramble (Discussed above).

12/. Correspondence: Nothing to report.

15/. AOB

Carys pointed out that the Wednesday Group 2023 Christmas lunch needs planning before the next meeting. **Tony**, following a conversation with Dave Gibson, mentioned the possibility of using the Masonic Lodge dining room and catering facilities for 2024. However, the committee expressed no great enthusiasm for this. It was agreed for this year to return to last year's very successful venue, La Vecchia Scuola. **Action Stephanie** to book this, if possible, for Wednesday 20th December.

The role titles for some Committee members' needs updating on the website. **Action Tony** to agree these titles with the people concerned and with the Chair and to pass them to Tom.

David: Paths Officer

Steve: Parish Footpaths Monitor

Vivienne: No title

Carys: Deputy Secretary

Tony: Secretary

With the introduction of a new email group for the Committee, Steve asked if the list of people in the group could be displayed when he sends a group email. **Action Tony** to look into this, or to provide ready access to a current list of committee members.

16/. Date and venue of next meetings

- Monday 16th Oct 2023 at the home of Steve Hoather, 8 Fox Garth, Nether Poppleton, YO26 6LP.

- Wednesday 22nd Nov 2023, AGM at Poppleton Tithe Barn, YO26 6LF