

East Cheshire Ramblers Group Minutes of the Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19th September 2018

1. Present

Jane Gay – Chair & Social and Events Secretary

Colin Finlayson – Treasurer

Sue Munslow – Membership Secretary

Adrian Flinn – Secretary

Apologies: Kathryn Carty and Dave Barraclough

The Chair welcomed our new Committee member Maggie Swindells

2. Matters arising from last meeting

All outstanding have been completed except:

- Midweek Walk leaders: a slight improvement noted in the posting and emailing sent well in advance of the walk dates. Another gentle reminder will be given to Walk Coordinators at the

- forthcoming AGM. **Action: Jane Gay**
- Footpath Projects Group: No contact with Brian Richardson yet. **Action: Dave Barraclough will follow up and report back to the Committee**
 - RA stipend to ECR Group: A new RA Finance Officer was appointed recently. **Action: Colin Finlayson will write requesting clarification/explanation and asking for an increase**
 - Emergency Cards: Another 100 cards will be ordered to be handed out during walks by Walk Leaders. **Action: Jane Gay will distribute**

3. New Issues

3.1 Preparations for AGM 2018

The draft schedule of activities was reviewed and agreed with a couple of wording changes. **Action: Adrian Flinn will issue an amended final version to the Committee**

4. Reports from Officers

4.1 Chair

Noted. Full report in Appendix 1. Issues

discussed were:

- Agreed to extend an open invitation to an RA Trustee to attend our forthcoming AGM. **Action: Jane Gay**
- Walk Coordinators will be asked to prepare a list of mentors (“buddies”) to help new Walk Leaders if they require assistance. **Action: Jane Gay**
- Agreed to set up Training Courses for new Walk Leaders. **Action: Colin Finlayson will contact external training providers to find out slots availabilities for early 2019 and then hand over to Kathryn Carty who is following this up**

4.2 Treasurer

Noted. Full report in Appendix 2. Issues raised were:

- Self funded activities: currently running a surplus.
- Unity Trust Bank charges: ECR charges will be small. Further information will be given at the AGM.
- New RA Finance Officer (Areas and Groups): see 2 above

4.3 Membership

Noted. No issues. Membership remains steady. Full report in Appendix 3

4.4 Social & Events

Noted. Full report in Appendix 4. Extra efforts will be made to publicise the Hoedown event (17 November 2018) to ensure success by handing copies of the flier during walks. **Action: all Committee members**

4.5 Footpaths

Noted. No issues. Full report in Appendix 5.

The Committee are grateful and acknowledge the hard work that volunteers put in the administration and inspections of footpaths in our area.

4.6 Publicity & Lost Ways

No report was produced for this meeting (see item 6.2 below)

5. Walk Programme

ECR are way above the other two groups in our

area regarding number of active Walk Leaders and number of walks available in a year.

Stroller Walks attendance is growing and are well supported so the plan is to continue offering this very short walks next year – see Chair full report Appendix 1

6. Any other business

6.1 Mileage Rate

The Committee agreed to enhance this rate for the Footpath Maintenance Working Group in the light of the case put forward by the Treasurer.

6.2 Lost Ways

RA (Jack Cornish) are arranging a series of training sessions at different venues across the UK to provide expert advice on the procedure to make claims to restore lost paths. They are free of charge. There is one in Sheffield on Saturday 3rd November 2018 which Colin Park is attending. Colin is looking for 2 – 3 volunteers from ECR to go with him to help him get a better understanding of the process. **Action:**

Colin Park will send to the Website Master a text of a Notice to be placed in the website seeking for volunteers from the wider membership

6.3 AGM afternoon tea

It was agreed to provide refreshments after the AGM. **Action: Jane Gay to arrange with help from other Committee members**

Date of next meeting

Friday 12th November 2018 at 1.00 pm at Chair house

Adrian Flinn – Secretary (19.9.2018)

Appendix 1

I've spent several weeks on holiday since our last meeting and am writing this from Australia where I have to say I feel slightly out of touch in spite of the fact I've moved several items on via email. I've been writing these reports over several weeks as WiFi is very iffy hence in several places there are updates as I add the latest information.

I have spent some time responding to the "plea for help" replies and feel very positive about the results. I know not many people did reply but we are able to move several things forward as a result of the responses.

We have had offers to join the committee, to lead walks, to help organise a coach trip, to help organise a residential, to organise social activities, to lead stroller walks and to become footpath inspectors. At the end of this report is a detailed analysis of what has been done. This is not for publication.

In my last report I mentioned Dave's idea about putting short walks on the website. I sent a map of my short walk to Roger but apparently he needs a verbal description of the route. Needless to say I've not done that.

I have sent out an email to walk coordinators asking them to circulate the leaders with a gentle reminder to aim for 2 weeks notice. Teresa Marshall, who puts walks onto national programme, thanked me. This would obviously make her job easier. This has resulted in a limited success. I intend to ask coordinators to remind leaders when they circulate their next programme.

The area AGM is at Crewe this year and a trustee of the Ramblers is attending. I've offered to lend our projector if it is required. I wonder if we should be trying to encourage people to attend. The topics which have been identified as of particular interest to our area are "Health and short group walks", "walking systems and maps" and "walk leadership".

Nationally, a free one day walk leader induction course should be available to areas early in 2019. I think our area has expressed an interest in running one of these days. I wonder if we should be putting something on for those who have expressed an interest via the plea for help. The National one could be a while before we can access it.

Update I have now completed information about ECR walks and leaders to be submitted by the area by 10th September to express our interest in being involved in the training. Anyone who wants a copy of the completed submission then please just email me. Facts I found interesting were, as far as active walk leaders are concerned, South Cheshire has 41, East Cheshire 95, and Congleton 49. Walks put on per year, South Cheshire 107, East Cheshire 400, and Congleton 120. Does anybody know what size membership the other groups have? This information also made me feel very positive.

Also wondering if we should invite a trustee to our AGM? Especially since we are hoping to make a presentation.

An incident report form was completed on the August long walkers week end. A member was taken to hospital and kept in over night. Thanks to Steve, Kathryn and Anna for all they did and the help and support they offered.

The stroller walks have been a great success this year and the plan is that this initiative continues next year.

Appendix 2

Self Funded Activities :

Details will be covered in Social Secretary's report however this period has seen the following events :

Long walkers weekend to Porthmadoc ,Final evening walk and supper,Coach trip to Forrest of Bowland .

Financial performance of the above will be reported verbally at the meeting

Bank

The balance at 11th Sept was £4924.01

Donations :

We have made donations of £50.00 to Oldham ,Glossop,Kinder and Buxton MRT's

Unity Trust Bank : Charges

We have been advised that from 4th September RA Finance are no longer able to absorb bank charges centrally ,these have now to be borne by individual Areas and Groups depending on usage. This issue is driven by the big clearing banks who are now saying that they can only apply charges to the account that incurs them.

So what does this mean to ECR :

From 5th Sept we will be charged 30p for each cheque deposited and 50p per £100 of cash deposited

The potential financial impact of this will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Annual Return/Year End Accounts

This years papers and time table has now been published and our return date for the above is :

24th October 2018

Status of Treasurer's actions from July meeting :

Item 4.2 Flagship Schemes Signage :

Signs were collected on 25th July and passed to Brian Richardson for installation.

Item 4.2a 2018/19 Budget :

Our Budget was to be submitted to Area/RA on 20th July.

Item 4.2b New RA Finance Officer (Areas and Groups)

As from 5th September Dulal Miah is the new RA Finance Officer for Areas and Groups.

ACF to make contact to lobby for a higher RA stipend .

Appendix 3

Membership remains steady. Fewer new members the last few months but fewer leaving.

It will be interesting to see if we have a marked increase in new members after Bollington Walking Festival

MAy.	594.	7 new members
June	594.	2 new members
July.	594.	0
August.	592.	2 new members

Appendix 4

The following events have taken place. As always a massive thank you to all the people who organise these events

A trip to Buxton Mountain Rescue organised by Brian Griffiths. Brian said “ this evening was superb and was preceded by a meal at the Beehive Combs”. He has given me contact details in case we want to run another evening.

A coach trip to Malham organised by Brian Griffiths. This went well but I think Brian was disappointed by the numbers, with several people cancelling late on. The weather was very very hot at that time and that could have had something to do with it.

A long walkers’ week end at Porthmadog organised by Steve Hull, Georgie and Peter Evison.

The evening walks programme, organised by Steve Hull, has finished with a supper organised by Nick Wild. This programme is led mainly by people who don’t naturally take part in evening walks, perhaps the participants are the perfect candidates for walk leader training!! I have attended a couple of these walks and they are very sociable events with virtually the whole group going for a drink and chat after the walks.

A coach trip to Forest of Bowland organised by Ann Thompson. This went well and without incident.

Events in rest of programme

Maggie mine open day

Meal organised by Andy. A flier has been circulated

Hoedown. 17th November. A flier has been circulated. Please consider running some fliers off for this event and circulating when you are walking. We really need a full house.

Christmas meals. These are all now being organised, with Teresa Marshal taking over the weekend meal which is open to all Ramblers.

Jan to June programme 2019

The following have been organised or are in the process of being organised.

1st January Keith’s Sherry walk organised by Melanie and Loraine- to be confirmed!!

Friday 1st February Quiz Night organised by Peter and Georgie Evison at the Tennis Club.

Friday 8th March Talk by Duncan Learmond organised by Maggie Swindells at Tennis Club.

26/28 April Long Walkers week end Thirsk organised by Colin Park

15/16 June week end away organised by Melanie Davy

2/4 August Long Walkers’ week end away.

To be organised if continuing with the same format as last year.

A meal in February

General Council dates

Evening walks start and finish dates.

Grand National Walk Rosie Forth?

Start of walking for health programme

Start of stroller walks

Crown green bowling coaching

Ramble with a Ranger

Ecology walk.

Coach trips

Picnic walk -we didn’t have one this year.

Still for discussion

A thank you do

I feel we need to be looking for fresh ideas.

Appendix 5

There has been no Footpath Committee Meeting since the last main ECR Committee Meeting. Other activities have been continuing as normal. The annual footpath inspections of all footpaths in our parishes is due to be complete by the end of September and informal feedback is that it is going well. We will be analysing results at our meeting on 3rd October, when we will identify this year's 'Priority Path Problems' to be raised with Cheshire East PROW team. At this meeting we have invited Jane Gay to attend in order to see what we do. We will also be preparing our Footpath Committee Report for the AGM later in the year.

We are also due to attend the Cheshire East PROW Consultative Meeting on October 6th in Crewe.

I completed my action of passing the names of potential new Footpath Inspectors to Tony Battilana who coordinates these volunteers.

A small number of Diversion Notices have been received and these are coordinated by Neil Collie and then delegated to the Footpath Committee member that has a path within his 'superarea' of several parishes.

There have also been 4 new path problems raised by the public, most through the Ramblers Path Problem form. These are under investigation but complainants are also recommended to contact PROW direct for their attention. We will intervene if PROW does not appear to react adequately.

I have not been able to discuss the development of a Projects Group with Brian Richardson and others for the future coordination of Project work arising from the Footpath Inspections. This action can continue to be identified against me.

Last week I attended the six monthly meeting of all Footpath Secretaries from Cheshire East at Crewe, where we discuss common problems and raise topics for discussing at the PROW Consultative Meetings. This is a useful meeting and it is worth noting how lucky we are in East Cheshire Ramblers to have a Footpath Committee of six members plus a team of Footpath Inspectors to inspect all parish footpaths in our area. Other Ramblers Groups generally have just one individual to deal with all correspondence from PROW and attend to issues raised by the public.

There are no pressing issues that I need to bring to the attention of the main Committee for their action. I shall unfortunately be unable to attend but Colin Finlayson should be able to answer any issues. The Footpath Committee remains one member short.

Dave Barraclough

16th September 2018