

**East Cheshire Ramblers Group**  
**Minutes of the Committee meeting held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**1. Present**

John Edwards – Chairman  
Colin Finlayson – Treasurer  
Jane Gay – Social & Events Secretary  
Sue Munslow – Membership Secretary  
Dave Barraclough - Footpath Committee Chairman  
Kathryn Carty  
Adrian Flinn – Secretary

**Apologies:** None

**2. Matters arising from last meeting**

**2.1 Weekend Walk programme (item 3.3):** the guidance that was sent to walk leaders over 2 years ago was discussed further and some additional amendments will be made and circulated to the Committee and Walk Coordinators for distribution. **Action: John Edwards**

**2.2** Emergency cards will be updated as well and printed for distribution. **Action: John Edwards**

**3. New Issues**

**3.1 Preparations for the 2017 ECR AGM on 11<sup>th</sup> November and Cheshire East Area AGM on 17<sup>th</sup> November:** the recruitment paragraph in the Invitation paper will be highlighted in bold and sent out to the membership asap. **Action: Adrian Flinn**  
The Chairman agreed to be available to provide assistance and coaching to the person taking on this post. **Action: all Committee members to identify and approach potential candidates to volunteer for the post of chairman**

**3.2 Coach trips:** in order to be able to offer coach trips in the social programme there is a need to recruit volunteers to be added to a pool of names that the Social & Events secretary can call to organize an outing. Similarly, there is a need to recruit volunteers to put their names forward to arrange residential weekends away. It was agreed to contact the individuals that regularly attend these events directly with a plea to put their names forward so that we can continue to provide these popular social events. **Action: Jane Gay and Adrian Flinn will pursue this further on behalf of the Committee**

**3.3 Reconstruction of Bollington steps:** it was agreed to pay for a commemorative plaque and, if possible, to be presented to the Footpaths Project leader at the AGM. **Action: Colin Finlayson will take this forward and make the arrangements**

**3.4 Ramblers Holiday Charitable Trust funds:** the Committee agreed that the first step is to identify all the jobs that may meet the criteria to qualify for a grant and then decide whether we need to apply for funding. **Action: Colin Finlayson will**

**coordinate on behalf of the Committee between the Footpath Project Team Coordinators and the PROW Enforcement Officer (Evan Pedley)**

**4. Reports from Officers**

**4.1 Chairman**

About 12 members joined the Bollington Festival walk on the invitation of David Rutley MP on Wednesday 27th September for a hike up to Pym Chair and Shining Tor and Thursbitch valley. (David stayed with us for the first hour and a half). At the start, with everyone gathered round for a photograph he said some generous and enthusiastic words about the work and influence of ECR in creating a "walking community" and looking after the path network. Members were equally enthusiastic in telling him more of what we do. He is arranging for his press office to send us an article of the event for comment before publishing it.

General Council 2018 will be held in Bangor, North Wales at the University on the weekend of 7th and 8th April. It is the turn of ECR to send two representatives on behalf of our Cheshire East Area.

The 3 years term as Chairman comes to an end this year and so we need to seek a successor (see 3.1 above)

**4.2 Treasurer**

The selffunded activities are running at a modest surplus for the year.

The balance for the year end (30<sup>th</sup> September) was £5296.68 which is an excellent achievement .

The 2018 budget was submitted to Central Office (CO) on the due date.

The timetable plus documentation for the 2017 Annual Return has Been received from CO and the return date for this years Group Accounts are 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

The work on the flagship project funded by ECR has started.

**4.3 Membership**

Less numbers are joining at the national level and this is reflected in In our membership probably due to people working longer with less early retirement. In August we had one new member and now have 610 active members (compared with 620 in May and 626 in February)

A recruitment leaflet received from CO was shared between us for distribution to any non member joining a walk or for display.

**4.4 Social & Events**

- Several events have taken place since our last meeting which were enjoyed by all and most well supported.

- By the end of October the draft social programme for Jan-July 2018 will be prepared to send out. A draft was shared with the Committee and the following issues raised:

a) Incident training course and/or Walk Leaders course: need to identify the demand and then decide as to whether run the course in house or outsource. **Action: Jane Gay to progress**

b) Barnaby Festival 15 – 24 June 2018: Walk Leaders through Coordinators will be asked to arrange walks in the Macclesfield area during the festival. **Action: Jane Gay**

c) A “thank you” Social Evening will be arranged in the second half of 2018. **Action: Jane Gay**

#### **4.5 Footpaths**

- There has been no Footpath Committee Meeting since the last main Committee Meeting – but business has continued as normal with some notifications of Diversions etc from Cheshire East to be considered by the FP Committee members handling each ‘superarea’ of parishes.

- The inspections for 2017 by our team of Footpath Inspectors is almost complete and we expect to be able to report another year with 100% inspection. The summary of these results is passed to PROW Enforcement Officers and they find these useful.

- Attended a Cheshire East PROW Consultative Meeting (twice yearly) that reported on relevant matters, including the route of HS2 (no effect on ECR area), footpath crossings across railways and the use of consultants to handle diversion claims. This meeting is also linked to a routine meeting with other Footpath Secretaries from other Ramblers Groups in Cheshire East area. These are useful and it is worth noting that they regard our arrangements of a Footpath Committee with delegated arrangements as being highly effective compared to their ‘one man’ effort. Our arrangements also give better continuity. They are unable to match our level of complete footpath inspections each year.

- We still have two vacancies on the Footpath Committee, following the retirement of two longstanding members (Peter Cummins and Alan Catherall) and it is important that we find replacements. They are specifically required to allow us to continue the coordination of the footpath inspections in groups of parishes or ‘superareas’. Some possible candidates were discussed and will be followed up.

**Action: Dave Barraclough**

#### **4.6 Publicity**

Nothing to report

#### **5. Any other Business**

- ECR Website: it was noted that the Social Programme for July – December 2017 could not be found in the website postings. **Action: John Edwards will investigate and speak with Webmaster**

- Second midweek short walk: is there a demand to add another short walk to the programme (eg. on a Friday?) **Action: Adrian Flinn will ask short walks Coordinators to assess interest through their Walk Leaders**

**Date of next meeting**

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at 1.30 pm in Social & Events Secretary house

Adrian Flinn – Secretary (16.10.2017)