

# **East Cheshire Ramblers Group Minutes of the Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

## **1. Present**

Jane Gay – Chair & Social and Events Secretary

Sue Munslow – Membership Secretary

Kathryn Carty

Adrian Flinn – Secretary

**Apologies:** Treasurer and Footpath Committee Chairman

## **2. Matters arising from last meeting held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

Most outstanding actions completed. Special thanks to the volunteer who manages the transfer the detail information when transferring the ECR walks to the Ramblers website.

The short weekend walks are increasing in popularity (item 2.4). A stroller walk programme (approx. 4 miles and easy) has been

arranged to take place every other Friday starting from 13<sup>th</sup> April to 28<sup>th</sup> September (details in the website)

The action relating to item 5.3 not yet completed. **Action: Treasurer will report at next meeting**

### **3. New Issues**

#### **3.1 Bulk notices for distribution to ECR membership**

The Secretary and Webmaster reviewed the performance of the PHP system that we currently use and other available options. It was agreed:

1. Replace the PHP system with the free MailChimp. The Webmaster has tested MailChimp and feels that it might be as good or better and more reliable.
2. The Webmaster has kindly agreed to take over the administration of MailChimp and closely monitor its performance for an undefined period of time. The Secretary (Adrian Flinn) will relinquish this responsibility.
3. All notices and information intended for circulation to the ECR members should be sent to

the Webmaster from now on.

4. The updated monthly membership list received by the Membership Secretary ( Sue Munslow) from Central Office should now be sent to the Webmaster.

5. The monthly payment to PHP system has been stopped by the Secretary (Adrian Flinn). The PHP system can be reactivated in the future if the MailChimp performance is not considered adequate for whatever reason. The Secretary will retain the User Manual and other relevant information if we need to go back to PHP.

Any feedback that we receive from our members after the switch must be shared with the Webmaster so that he can resolve any problems that may arise.

### **3.2 RA General Council on 7-8<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

feedback from this annual meeting was provided by the Treasurer who attended on behalf of the Area (a report was circulated to the Chairs in each Group). The next meeting will take place in Manchester in mid April 2019 (venue and date to be confirmed). Two specific issues relevant to ECR:

a) it was arranged for the RA Lost Ways Project

Manager to make direct contact with our coordinator on this project and hopefully can assist in the request for help with legal advice (see 4.6 below)

b) direct contact has been arranged between our Webmaster and one of the new RA IT team to compare Footpath database cooperation

### **3.3 Guidance from RA for the General Data Protection Regulation**

The regulation comes into effect on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and will introduce more stringent rules for how organisations manage personal data and it is essential that we at ECR comply with these. RA have put together a toolkit to provide guidance and support. Also, RA have hired a Data Protection Officer who can provide advice to our Group. Our Membership Secretary volunteered to be the focal point and overview the process and implementation. **Action: Sue Marlow and Jane Gay will identify the activities in ECR that require personal data management by using the “Managing personal data” template provided in the toolkit and provide a way forward. A draft will be circulated for**

**discussion at our next meeting.**

## **4. Reports from Officers**

### **4.1 Chair**

Noted – see report in Appendix 1

### **4.2 Treasurer**

Noted

### **4.3 Membership**

Membership stable in the 1Q18 and continue to attract new members:

January 592 (3 new members)

February 590 (5 new members)

March 590 (6 new members)

### **4.4 Social & Events**

Noted – see report in Appendix 2

### **4.5 Footpaths**

Noted – see report in Appendix 3

### **4.6 Publicity**

Noted. A plea for more articles to cover walks outside “Lyme Park” and “Nelson Pit”. Legal

help for The Lost Ways project has been identified (see item 3.2 above)

## **5. Any other Business**

**5.1 The Cry for help questionnaire** – some ammendments were made and a draft will be circulated to the Committee for final approval at the next meeting. **Action: Jane Gay and Kathryn Carty**

### **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 10.00 am at Chair house

Adrian Flinn – Secretary (15.5.2018)

## Appendix 1

Well I feel slightly out of touch as I've only just returned from Australia from where I managed to keep in touch via email but didn't write any notes so not sure where to start.

I have found it very helpful to receive the minutes of the footpath committee and be kept up to date with all they are doing. I'm hoping that a brief summary can go onto the website so all members have an understanding of all the work carried out on their behalf. If any member of the committee would like a copy of the footpath minutes then please just ask. They are not for general circulation.

I have obtained a copy of the constitution (attached) and we can have up to 9 members and need 5 to be quorate. A challenge in itself. I'm suggesting at the next AGM we make a proposal that we only need to be quorate when we agree the budget and maybe we reduce the number to 4.

Thanks to Colin for attending the General Council and, as a result of what he learnt, sharing the information with several people. We have received his report

I have met with Kathryn re designing a questionnaire but would like to discuss this further as, interestingly groups at the General Council felt that a questionnaire could be counter productive. So how do we find out what people want and, maybe more importantly get them actively involved. A topic for discussion. I will add the draft questionnaire to this report which I think may be more acceptable if labelled a plea for help.

I've been circulating those involved with the information about "Hidden Gems" walks. I think Sue Thersby and Audrey Sheen have taken up the challenge. Not sure how many others will do.

Please all try and read the guidance for General Data Protection Regulation before the meeting as that will enable us to progress the meeting speedily, I hope.

Below is the final sentence and list of tasks from my last report. It's heartening to realise we have made progress on several items.

There are several topics from the last few meetings which I think we need to keep in mind so they don't disappear. They are

Notices recognising footpath work ***on the way to being ordered.***

Celebrating and recognising volunteers

Emergency aid or map reading course.

Questionnaire to membership to get an understanding of what they want from the group and what they are prepared to offer. ***Draft drawn up calling it a cry for help.***

Events onto the website. ***Sorted.***

New General and footpath committee members ***Maggie Swindells interested in attending general committee so I'll copy her into all our reports and the agenda. Footpath committee now complete thanks to Colin***

## Appendix 2

Since my last report the following have taken place

**A talk with Cheshire East Ranger Martin James.** This was very well supported and all who attended seemed to enjoy the evening. A special thanks to those committee members who turned up early to help and stayed after the event to help clear away. This is not always the case. Also thanks to Caroline Finlayson who helped with the food.

**Meal at Swadesh and Sangam.** This was attended by about 25 people who all seemed to enjoy the meal. Andy felt that the service was poor and was annoyed by the fact we couldn't pay by cheque when he had specifically checked that this would be ok. It was not a problem as I had my credit card with me but I don't think we will be going back.  
Thanks to Andy for organising.

**The General Council.** This was attended by Colin Finlayson who has disseminated the information and written a report for the meeting.

**Stroller walks** have started with the first one having 6 walkers. More information at the meeting.

I'm concerned that we still have no replacement for the social secretary and the programme for the next 6 months is lacking a residential. ( Frank and I usually organise one but are not able to do so this year). I think this is part and parcel of the discussion on how to get more people involved.

### **Still ideally needed for July to December programme**

Christmas meals

Residential

Emergency aid training

Walk leader training

Thank you social for activists

## Appendix 3

There has been one Footpath Committee Meeting since the last ECR Committee and it was generally 'business as usual' with no special items needing decisions from the main ECR Committee. The Minutes have been copied to the Jane Gaye as Chair of ECR but not to all ECR members.

I am unable to attend the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> April because I will be attending the Cheshire East Public Rights Of way Consultative Meeting at Crewe. This is held twice a year and attended by representatives of the 'User Bodies' including various Ramblers Groups, other local walking societies, horse riding and cycling groups who meet the main PROW Officers and some Councillors who are on the PROW Committee for Cheshire East.

This meeting is routinely preceded by a meeting of the various Footpath Secretaries from other Ramblers Groups in Cheshire East to discuss various topics of common interest and to identify issues that we request to be discussed at the PROW Consultative Meeting. To illustrate these topics (but it is not planned to do this for every ECR Meeting), we are requesting discussion on:-

1. What consultation will be held with User Groups if Network Rail apply to close any footpath or road crossings of railway lines? This follows problems elsewhere in the UK and some in Cheshire West.
2. Are there any plans to convert any footpaths to cycle ways? This arises from a Ramblers publication on 'Shared Use'
3. What is the policy regarding 'making good' footpaths disturbed by cattle or horses? This arises from a problem in Marthall.
4. Why are adopted Highways not shown on the CE Interactive Map (but they are on the Cheshire West map)?
5. Why can the list of '<Mapping Errors not be made available and acted upon?
6. What is the policy on consultation for temporary diversions (arising from a problem at Alderley Edge)?
7. I will meet with the two 'Enforcement Officers to update the progress on rectifying our list of 'Problem Paths'

Other topics from the Footpath Committee include:-

Tony Battilana has organised the schedule of Footpath Inspectors for the 2018 inspections and sent out instructions/guidance. We have a full quota of Inspectors.

Neil Collie is coordinating effort on 5 Consultations and 3 Orders for footpaths. Comments on each one is delegated to the respective member of the Committee responsible for parishes in his 'superarea'.

There was no information from Brian Richardson on his Projects Group but it is believed there has been little activity during the winter months.

The Committee decided that it cannot make any application to the South West Peak Landscape Project for matched funding. Although we have made several suggestions for useful projects, the rules of the scheme require the applicant to

become the Project Manager who is contractually responsible for the work and neither the Footpath Committee nor the Projects Group feel able to take this on for the types of heavy project work involved.

The Lost Ways project is currently on hold, with Colin Park not getting any offers of support to undertake the legal side of the work to apply for Lost Ways. Colin Finlayson reported from the General Council that there has been a new Project Manager for Lost Ways appointed at Central Office (Jack Cornish). He will pass on his details to both Colin Park and myself.

This summarises the recent work of the Footpath Committee. There are no topics that require decisions from the Main ECR Committee. My only question to the Committee is whether this report is too detailed for the ECR Minutes – or would you simply prefer a simple report stating “Footpath Committee business as usual, no topics requiring the attention of the Main Committee?”