

Ramblers East Cheshire Group Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019 at Macclesfield Tennis Club (subject to approval at the AGM 2020)

There were 40 members that signed the attendance register.

### Welcome

The chair welcomed members to the AGM and thanked them for attending.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

The following members sent their apologies: Audrey Sheen, John Edwards, David Gylee, Dave Barraclough, Judith Anderson, Andy Davies, Alan Catherall and Michael Murphy.

#### 2. Minutes of the AGM held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2018

The minutes were accepted unanimously as a true and fair record of this meeting (proposed by Helen Richardson and seconded by Sue Munslow)

### 3. Matters arising from the AGM held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2018

To clarify the question asked regarding the insurance provided by the Ramblers. All ramblers are covered by what is known as liability insurance when on an ECR group walk. Further information can be found at the Ramblers website ([www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk)) where there is an Insurance Guide (Login in your Account and go to Home >Volunteer zone >Support & Development alphabetically sorted > volunteer toolkits > Insurance toolkit and download the latest Insurance Guide)

### 4. Annual Reports from Officers (posted in the website for reference)

#### 4.1 Chair

During her address to the meeting the Chair highlighted:

a) Walk programme: this year the Stroller Walks have become very successful and well attended. However, the midweek and weekend walks have run with radical variations in the number of walkers. There has been much discussion about

this at the Committee and amongst the members. In the light of the statistical data gathered in 2019 so far the Committee decided to leave the programme unchanged as there was a diversity of opinions that no clear way forward has evolved. All the volunteers were thanked for their contribution to this amazing and varied programme of walks. The Walk Coordinators are always looking for new volunteers to lead walks (see (d) below).

b) The work carried out by the Footpath Committee was highlighted and thanked for the work they do.

c) There has been a change in the responsibility for posting information in the ECR Website (Maggie Swindells) and for circulating communications as bulk emails to the membership (Steve Hull). The Committee are looking for volunteers with Facebook, WhatsApp and/or Instagram knowledge so that we can make use of these media in our means of communication to help to attract younger members.

d) Several social and training events were organized during 2019. The walk Leader

introductory course run in July was a success and the Committee may run another course in 2020 and depending on demand will run them annually.

e) The Committee are looking to coopt 2 volunteers to join.

f) Finally, everyone who have volunteered and contributed to make a success of ECR were acknowledged and appreciated very much.

There were no questions from the floor.

## 4.2 Treasurer

Key points made during the address were:

a) A surplus of £1082.47 with our bank balance standing at £5882.48 which is up on last year figure of £4801. ECR remains in a robust financial position and has sufficient provision available to invest in footpath improvement schemes once they have been identified.

b) Our funding for the year from Ramblers was £1200 (up from £800 requested last year)

c) Our self funded activities generated a surplus of £63

d) ECR received £610 in commissions from Ramblers Holidays which is a sizeable increase from previous years. Donations totaling £200 were made to our local Mountain Rescue Teams (Kinder, Buxton, Glossop and Oldham). ECR also donated £500 to Cheshire East Council to help fund the repair of Harrop Bridge.

e) the vast majority of members are now using internet payments.

A question from a member was asked relating to expenses incurred by walk leaders at weekend away events (ie. Recce charges). A rough framework was discussed at the last Committee meeting in November and details will be finalized at the next Committee meeting due in February 2020.

### 4.3 Membership Secretary

The following members that had passed away in the past year were remembered with a minute silence: Derek Thornley, Nora Shercliff and Gabriel Drew  
Since the last AGM our membership numbers have gone down from 593 to 566 in line with national figures. Our group are actively trying to recruit new members by leaving publicity leaflets in local leisure

centres, medical centres and libraries. Central Office have started a campaign to keep new members by providing guidance to the local groups in the country (see report in the website for details).

The need for members to keep their personal details up to date was emphasised to ensure that the ECR group members list which is issued monthly by Central Office is up to date – changes can only be done by the individual login into his/her Account in the Ramblers website. It is important to update any change in an email address immediately so that the change appears in the monthly membership list as the list is used to update the bulk email service (used to send ECR communications to our members) on a monthly basis.

There were no questions from the floor.

#### 4.4 Social & Events Secretary

A full and varied programme of events were provided to our members which were well supported. Our social programme depends so much on the generosity of members who are prepared to give up their time to provide events for all of us and they were thanked on behalf of all the membership for their time, enthusiasm,

imagination and continued support. We are looking for volunteers to run a Weekend Away in 2020

There were no questions from the floor.

#### 4.5 Footpath Committee Chairman

In the absence of Dave Barraclough, Neil Collie stood in his place to answer any questions arising from the report (posted in the website for reference). This year has been an active but fairly routine year for the Footpath Committee activities. The significant work done by Colin Park in the listing of potential Lost Ways across Cheshire was acknowledged as he is now standing down from managing this project on behalf of ECR.

There were no questions from the floor.

#### 4.6 Publicity Officer

This year has seen walk articles appearing in the Macclesfield Express on all but one week. Walk articles from anyone leading walks are welcome, especially if it is a new or unfamiliar area (instructions on the format of an article are given in the report posted in the website). In addition, walk articles are now posted in our website for

those members that do not have access to the newspaper.

There were no questions from the floor.

## **5. Other Reports**

### **5.1 Footpath Maintenance Projects Team (coordinated by Brian Richardson)**

The Team has carried out one project during this year – a major path re-instatement on National Trust land in Alderley Edge. The Coordinator hopes to engage the Team in several tasks in 2020.

There were no questions from the floor.

### **5.2 ECR Walk Statistics (posted in the website for reference)**

In the light of the statistical analysis available for 2019 the Committee have decided to leave our extensive and varied Walk Programme format unchanged – see 4.1 (a) above.

The work done by Ralph Atherton and Andy Davies was acknowledged and appreciated. Ralph will not be involved in the collection and data crunching any more and this task will be done by Andy from now.

## 6. Election of Officers and Committee

The following stood for reelection and were elected unopposed in block by a show of hands: Jane Gay (Chair), Colin Finlayson (Treasurer), Sue Munslow (Membership Secretary), Maggie Swindells (Social & Events Secretary), Dave Barraclough (Footpath Committee representative), Colin Park (Publicity Officer) and Keith Anderson (Committee Member).

Kathryn Carty put forward her name for election to the vacant position of Secretary (duly proposed and seconded). There were no other nominations received by the cut off date so Kathryn was unanimously elected by a show of hands.

The Committee are seeking to coopt 2 additional volunteers to join.

In addition, there is a vacancy for a volunteer to take on the management of the Lost Ways project.

The Chair thanked the outgoing Secretary for the work done during the last 3 years.

## 7. Appointment of Independent Examiner (Auditor of Accounts)

Ken Hobbs was reappointed unanimously by a show of hands.

## 8. Motions

None

## 9. Any other Business

None

The meeting closed at 3 pm

Adrian Flinn – ECR Committee Secretary

9<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Dates of meetings to be held in 2020 (venues to be confirmed in late summer):

- ECR 2020 AGM – date to be confirmed later
- The Area 2020 AGM – date to be confirmed later