

	East Cheshire Ramblers AGM
	Date of Meeting – 23rd November 2024

Location: Macclesfield Tennis Club, SK11 8LF

Meeting called by Maggie Swindells

Attendees	Maggie Swindells (MS)	Chair
	Colin Finlayson (CF)	Treasurer
	Gina Thompson (GT)	Social Secretary
	Anne Ball (AB)	Membership Secretary
	Louise Whittaker (LW)	Footpath Secretary
	Jennie Mellor (JM)	Social Media Secretary
	Sue Munslow (SM)	Committee Member
	Jane Gay (JG)	Committee Member
	Melanie Davy (MD)	Committee Member
	Nigel Hersee (NH)	Secretary
Other Members Present	Steve Hull	Chris Dale
	Jane Selva	Barbara Hare
	Roger Fielding	Kathy Priestley
	Margaret Kemble	Terry Pritchard
	Jane Collorick	Frank Gay
	Dave Collorick	John Galligan
	Maureen Walker	Neil Collie
	John Glynn	Beth Marshall
	Nick Wild	Steve Osborne
	Marion Duff	Jean Osborne
	Gillian Kay	Ian Mabon
	Brian Richardson	Kathryn Carty
	Nick Brearley	Denise Hutchinson
	Graham Bothwell	Helen Richardson
	Janet Allen	
Distribution	Committee plus website	
Note	Additional comments to the Appendices are recorded as sub sections below the relevant Appendix for clarity.	

1	Apologies	
	Ann Thompson Keith Anderson Ken Hobbs Ruth and David Harrison Michael Murphy Paul and Ruth Simms Edwina Forrest Susan Mayes Georgie and Peter Everson	Note
	Chair's Welcome	
	MS welcomed the assembly; it was so good to see so many members attending, particularly given the dreadful weather conditions.	
2	Last AGM meeting	
2.1	Minutes approval proposed by Chis Dale and seconded by Melanie Davy	Note
3	Matters arising from last meeting	
	None	Note
4	Presentation by Matt Chapman	
4.1	Matt Chapman is Cheshire East Council's new Network Management, Enforcement & PROW (Public Rights of Way) Officer for the East Cheshire area. Matt gave a presentation with slides, introducing himself, talking about Rights of Way and reporting issues, and explaining the kind of work he carries out on behalf of the Council.	Info
4.2	Louise Whittaker thanked Matt for his excellent presentation.	Note
5	Annual Reports	
	As the reports were in General circulation prior to the meeting, it was proposed NOT to read them out at the meeting but discuss any matters arising.	
5.1	Appendix 1 Report by Chair	
5.1.1	MS confirmed that, as a result of changes within RA Central Office, there was a significant increase in workload. However, the message was it is the committee's priority to manage those increasing demands in order to protect members and maintain a focus on enabling as many people as possible to enjoy walking with ECR. She stressed that the requirement for new walk leaders to complete three modules prior to leading a walk was not onerous. They were not exams and were actually useful training exercises. Volunteers could make as many attempts as they required in order to complete them and they are available to all registered volunteers.	
5.1.2	MS wanted to issue thanks to the following outgoing committee members for their invaluable contribution over their years in post Colin Finlayson steps down as Treasurer after many years serving the committee. He has done a brilliant job keeping the books balanced, taking a legal and pragmatic approach to expenditure. MS said she had personally valued his wise and thoughtful advice. Sue Munslow stepped down as Membership Secretary in 2023 but remained on the committee to support Anne Ball in the role. Sue has achieved the Mountain Training Hill and Moorland Leader qualification this year and we wish her well in her new adventures. Nigel Hersee steps down as Secretary and MS personally thanked him for doing an excellent job as Secretary whilst working full time.	Note



Keith Anderson has served as Lost Ways Coordinator and it is appreciated how complex a role this has been; “knitting fog” comes to mind and thanks go out to Keith for sticking with it.

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5.1.3	MS thanked all the committee members who work hard to ensure the ECR Group retains an amazing walk programme. They, together with Walk Coordinators, Maintenance Team, Footpath Inspectors, Website Management, and by no means least, the many Walk Leaders, make this a very successful group. We still need to maintain our search for new walk leaders and further training will be provided in 2025 to encourage more people to volunteer for the role.	
5.1.4	MS ended with a passage from Alfred Wainwright as below. <i>“The fleeting hour of life of those who love the hills is quickly spent, but the hills are eternal. Always there will be a lonely ridge, the dancing beck, the silent forest; always there will be the exhilaration of the summits. These are for seeking, and those who seek and find while there is still time will be blessed both in mind and body.”</i>	
5.2	Appendix 2 Report by Treasurer	
5.2.1	The finance report was briefly discussed. Steve Osborne asked a question about the Ramblers’ Central Office contribution and the ECR residual surplus, which remains healthy. CF answered the questions.	Note
5.3	Appendix 3 Report by Membership Secretary	
5.3.1	AB wanted to offer thanks to the Affiliated Members of ECR who had joined and also led ECR walks this year. AB also brought to the group’s attention the sad loss of the following members who will be sadly missed. June Mabon Michael Jackson Peter Whitehead Jeff Miller There followed a minute’s silence to reflect.	Note
5.3.2	In closing AB proposes to introduce information leafletting across the region to secure increased membership. Giving out leaflets at the Bollington Festival or to U3A walking groups was suggested. AB asked for volunteers to leaflet in their own areas.	
5.4	Appendix 4 Footpath Secretary	
5.4.1	LW gave her special thanks to Neil Collie, the Footpath Committee and the Footpath Inspectors, three of whom are standing down this year (Peter Cummins, Mike Harding and Sue Munslow). Between them, they had spent more than 50 years inspecting footpaths. LW expressed particular thanks to each of them. As a mark of ECRs appreciation all three received a certificate to thank them for their contribution. Finally LW thanked Roger Fielding for his meticulous footpath database and web site management.	
5.5	Appendix 5 Report by Social Secretary	
5.5.1	GT expressed a special thanks, for social event contributions, to: Lorraine Tolley (Sherry Walk), Melanie Davy (Sherry Walk, Weekend Away, Kim Letson’s talk), Steve Hull (Coach Trip), Sue Munslow (Geology Walk) Ann Thompson (Weekend Away), Michael Murphy (Pickle Ball).	
5.5.2	GT asked for more contributors for Social Events and explained how the Social Calendar worked: it is a “Date for your Diary” document. All events listed would be advertised formally nearer the date with full details of how to book and pay.	
5.5.3	The subject of the Christmas meal at the Davenport Golf Club was discussed and GT proposed that in future she would arrange an option for a two course lunch together as well as the three courses. Members also wished to maintain the tradition of two Christmas lunches.	

5.5.4	GT advised a date for the diary: Coach Trip to Clitheroe on 10 th May 2025. GT advised that coach travel was much more expensive now and for this to be financially viable it was essential members took up the seating early so costs could be finalised.				
5.6	Appendix 6 Report by Lost Ways Coordinator				
5.6.1	In the absence of Keith Anderson please refer to the report issued.				Note
5.7	Appendix 7 Report by Social Media Secretary				
5.7.1	JM highlighted the report issued and during the Chair’s report MS confirmed that the possibility of an Instagram platform was in discussion.				
6	Additional Reports				
6.1	Appendix 8 Walk Numbers Report				
6.1.1	Steve Hull wished to express thanks to the Walk Leaders and referred to the report previously issued.				
6.2	Appendix 9 Footpath Maintenance Report				
6.2.1	Brian Richardson confirmed his thanks to all the team who worked diligently in maintaining good access to the region’s pathways. For more detail, please refer to the report in the appendices.				
7	Election of Officers				
7.1	Chair	Maggie Swindells			
	Membership Secretary	Anne Ball			
	Social & Events Secretary	Gina Thompson			
	Footpath Secretary	Louise Whittaker			
	Social Media Secretary	Jennie Mellor			
	Committee Member	Melanie Davy			
	Committee Member	Jane Gay			
7.2	All proposed by NH and seconded by Helen Richardson				Note
8	Additional Nominations				
8.1	Name	Role	Proposed by	Seconded by	Note
	Margaret Kemble	Treasurer	Colin Finlayson	Maggie Swindells	
	Steve Hull	Secretary	Anne Ball	Melanie Davy	
	Terry Prichard	Committee Member (non-voting)	Jennie Mellor	Gina Thompson	
9	Vacancies				
9.1	There is a vacancy for Lost Ways Coordinator				
10	Motions Received				
10.1	Constitution Motion To amend the ECR constitution to ensure it is gender neutral and is inclusive of every member, irrespective of gender. Changes proposed are as follows: Paragraph 6 (vii) Replace "Chairman" with "Chair" Paragraph 7 (i) Replace "Chairman" with "Chair" Paragraph 11 Replace "Chairman" with "Chair"				

	Paragraph 9 Amend as follows: Replace "Any member of a Committee shall vacate his office if: He (she) gives notice of his intention to resign and his (at the time when his) resignation is accepted. He (she) fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee as may be convened unless the failure to attend was due to some reason approved by the Committee". With "Any member of a Committee shall vacate their office if: They give notice of their intention to resign and their (at the time when their) resignation is accepted. They fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee as may be convened unless the failure to attend was due to some reason approved by the Committee". Proposed by Maggie Swindells and seconded Melanie Davy The motion was carried unanimously.	
11	Appointment of Independent Examiner (Auditor of Accounts)	
11.1	Ken Hobbs was agreed as the Independent Examiner	Note
12	Request	
12.1.	MS requested Volunteers for the following roles: Walk Leaders, Footpath Inspectors, Coach Trips, Weekends Away & Ideas for Social Events.	Note
13	Any Other Business	
13.1	Jane Collorick brought to the meeting the question of stiles and suggested that many members have difficulty with them, particularly the older badly maintained wooden stiles and ladder stiles and asked the Team and Matt Chapman if there could be a commitment to replace these with Kissing Gates.	
13.2	Brian Richardson responded on behalf of the Footpath Maintenance Team and confirmed that, where possible if resources allowed, this was in hand. Matt Chapman on behalf of Cheshire East Council confirmed that this replacement was on going however was dictated by the resources available to the unit, which were clearly tight in today's climate.	
13.3	MD asked for ideas from the floor for Weekends Away.	

Meeting Closed @ 15.40

Coffee, Tea, cakes etc. were available to all following the meeting