

Annual General Meeting of Bury St Edmunds Group Ramblers' Association held at 10.30 on Sat. 4th November 2023 at Southgate Community Centre

Attendance 41

1 Welcome – Val welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for Absence – 11 apologies were received and listed.

3 Minutes of AGM 5th Nov. 2022 – were agreed and signed. Proposed by Ralph Brighton ; seconded by Rosalind Round.

4 Matters Arising – none.

5 Chair's Annual Report – Val observed that significant changes to the Committee had taken place at the last A.GM. and also that the influence of Covid was now greatly reduced. She stressed that we are united by a love of walking and by a determination to have a strong footpath network.

Our plan as a Committee was to maintain the events and activities that work for our membership and to reintroduce some events that had been affected by Covid and also to try a few new ventures, while taking into account cost, our impact on the environment and the aim to provide something for all.

Val thanked all the Committee for their input and particularly thanked Richard Stammers for help and support given to Mark and herself as new committee members. Special thanks, too, to Dave Hodgkinson for a lot of help given to committee members with technology, Walks Manager and Jotform. A very big thank-you to Rosie Perham, Richard Stammers, Shirley Stammers, Lynne Bambury and Dave Bambury for organising April holiday at Llandrinod Wells in 2023 and the forthcoming Minehead trip in 2024. Richard Stammers will step down from managing the holiday finances after the Minehead holiday, and will be replaced by Mark Broughton.

With thanks to all involved with organising, pictures were shown from some events including New Year's Day walk, Pancake Day walk (Chris Flood), London walk in memory John Gateshill (Rosalind Round, Dave and Lynne Bambury), Llandrinod Wells holiday, Week of Walks in July (Val), Sheringham day trip (Chris Flood and Dave Hodgkinson) and Quiz and evening walk and meal (Sue and John Hawthorn).

We have continued our programme of Tuesday, Friday and Saturday walks, with a big thank-you to all our leaders. We need more leaders to share the workload. Help is always at hand if some are considering leading a walk for the first time or wish to resume after a considerable gap. Walk ideas to committee members are very welcome.

A presentation was made to Julia Bradbury for organising the walks programme for at least 11 years. Julia has worked tirelessly to encourage new leaders to come forward and to fill any gaps in the programme. Julia has done a really key role very efficiently in a very encouraging manner. THANK-YOU!!!

6 Membership report – Chris Flood reported that membership is 384, the same as last year, including 13 affiliates. The Facebook group has 168 members and 126 actively engage. On statistics up to August 2023, Bury were the 6th highest in the country for number of walks on programme. At present 21 members are not on the email list: please let Dave H know if you wish to be added to this list.

7 Treasurer's report – Mark thanked Richard Stammers for the handover of the Treasurer's role and Paul Harrison for examining and signing off the accounts, the Annual Return (submitted to Area Treasurer 16th October), and the Statement of Accounts presented to the AGM. Mark presented the Statement of Accounts for both the Main and Social accounts, setting out high-level Payments and Receipts numbers. He explained the difference between the Ramblers funded Main Account (£95 fixed sum p.a. plus £1.01 per registered Bury Ramblers' member), and the self-funded Social Account.

Mark highlighted the main items of expenditure: £384 from the Main account for the St. Edmunds Way enamelled sign displayed by Rosie at the meeting and also the new PA system used at the AGM : £152.98 from Main Account, £50 from Social Account. Mark explained the main difference between the 22-23 numbers, and those presented by Richard last year for 21-22: the holiday finances are much simplified as a result of members contracting individually with the hotel.

One suggestion from the floor – Ralph Brighton – regarding the 'free float' on the Social Account – balance excluding committed funds. This float at financial year end is £1, 497 (just within the £1,500 maximum allowed by Ramblers head office), and will be shown on next year's presentation, as per Ralph's suggestion.

8 Group Footpath Secretaries Reports – thanks from the Chair to both Jenny Bradin and Lynne Bambury for a great deal of work on our behalf. Lynne and Jenny both reported on the screen with maps, diagrams and key points. Full reports will be published on the web site.

Lynne reported on Area 1B on On-Going footpath Issues including Rougham 36, Dalham 10 and 18, Rickinghall 22, Badwell Ash 11, Westley 1 and Bury St. Ed 7, Whepstead 13, Bury 14 and also on the Western Way development, St. James Middle School and Solar Farm on the Stour Valley Path.

Jenny reported on Area 1A including Ingham/ Culford 2 & 7, Hepworth 10 and 11, Hempyard Bridge at Ixworth Abbey, Closure of bridge over Ampton Water, New footpath between Pakenham 21 and Great Barton 22, Whatfield 14, Euston permitted paths, Temple Bridge Cavenham and Icklingham creation order, claimed bridleways in Brandon and Lakenheath and she gave a verbal report on Network Rail and Level crossing stiles, including Mellis Level crossing, Cowpasture Lane. Jenny also reported on Suffolk Area Council.

9 Appointment Area Council representative: Jenny Bradin elected unanimously.

10 Appt. of Examiner of Accounts: Ralph Brighton. Proposed Lynne Bambury. Seconded Alison Stevenson. Elected unanimously.

11 Election of Officers and Committee: Chair – Val Conaboy – proposed Jenny Bradin. Seconded Richard Stammers. Elected unanimously.

Programme Co-ordinator – Tom Berry – proposed Julia Bradbury. Seconded Val Conaboy. Elected unanimously.

The other remaining committee member were voted en bloc: Chris Flood, Sue Hawthorn, Mark Broughton, Jenny Bradin, Lynne Bambury and Tony Rowe. Proposed Rosie Perham. Seconded Chris Harrison. Elected unanimously.

12. A.O.B. Thanks to Dave Hodgkinson for his help running the meeting.

Meeting closed 12.42