

2025 Annual General Meeting of Bury St Edmunds Ramblers' Association held at 10.30 on Saturday 8th November at Southgate Community Centre

Attendance – 50

1 – Welcome- Val welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2- Apologies for Absence – 8 apologies were received and listed.

3 -Minutes of AGM of 2nd Nov. 2024 – were agreed and signed. Proposed by Jenny Bradin; seconded Chris Harrison.

4- Matters Arising – none not covered below.

5 – Chair's Annual Report –The group has been able to offer a choice of 3 walks in most weeks. This is a great achievement.

Val highlighted – with photos on screen in most cases- various activities including Edmunds Restaurant New Year's Meal (booking again in March 2026 – awaiting menu); Pancake Day walk and meal – Pakenham Fox this year using same chef as was at the Mill; Henley and Goring's group visit to our area; Newby Bridge holiday in Lake District; Capital Ring walk for London trip; Walking week – 50 miles in 4 days of Wool Towns' walk: 6 people completed all the days; Southwold Outing trip; Summer Evening walks; and Harrogate Flexi-break.

Val thanked all those who had run or helped to run activities and those who had lead walks. She observed that walking during July for several days might need consideration in 2026 due to excessive heat and that more Summer Evening walks might be feasible as these had been well attended this year.

The group is gradually re-walking the St. Edmunds way. Thank-you Cath Anderson for planning and leading the stages and to Ron, Rosie and Jenny for bringing the waymarking up to date.

Val concluded that we continue to need walk leaders and reminded those present that walk leader training must be completed by 31st December. Help and support is available from the committee.

6 – Membership report: Chris Flood reported that we currently have 371 members – 20 more than last year – and 19 affiliates. 217 members are on the Facebook group.

From January to October inclusive 1417 walkers attended 88 walks, which were led by 20 leaders. An average of roughly 16 walkers per walk. Crucially 26 walk leaders have now completed training, but hopefully this number will increase by December 31st. 2025.

7- Walks Co-ordinator's Report: Tom also drew attention to the figures quoted by Chris and reminded members the necessary training could be watched in one and a half hours and one hour respectively. He stressed that we particularly need more volunteers to lead Friday walks.

8 – Treasurer's Report: Mark Broughton presented the AGM Treasurer's Report which summarises the Main Account and the Social Account as at the 30th September 2025 financial year end. Mark expressed his thanks to Ralph Brighton for examining the accounts and signing off both the Annual Report to Ramblers Head Office and the AGM Report. Ralph has agreed to continue as Account Examiner for a further year.

Mark reminded us that Ramblers Head Office provides an annual allocation of funds for the Main Account based upon membership numbers. In the 24/25 year the full £468 allocation was drawn down and used for First Aid training (shown under the Walk Leader Training heading in the AGM Report).

Mark also drew attention to the reduction of the "free float" in the Social Account (monies held on the account not allocated to any particular purpose or event). At the 23/24 year end the free float stood at £1,771.57 (in excess of the Ramblers Head Office permitted figure of £1,500), but this had been reduced to £1,178.70 at 24/25 year end as a result of the committee's policy of giving small subsidies to a number of events during the year, spreading the benefit across as many Bury Ramblers members as possible.

A vote on the Treasurer's Report (with thanks to Mark and Ralph), was carried unanimously – proposed by Sue Hawthorn and seconded by Dave Bambury.

9 – Group Footpath Secretaries Reports: Thanks from the Chair to both Lynne Bambury and Jenny Bradin for a great deal of work on our behalf. Lynne and Jenny both reported on the screen with maps, diagrams and key points. For more detail see the website.

Lynne's report for Area 1B included details on Braggon's Hill and a proposed new solar farm at Hessem, Barrow Bridleway 12, Wickhambrook FP's 10 and 11, Bury St. Edmunds FP 11, Rougham FP 23 and Rougham FP 36.

Jenny gave her report on Area 1A after 12 years of footpath work. She reminded members that they can report footpath issues from our website. She appealed for a replacement, but it had been that suggested if no one replacement comes forward, that a solution might be for one named email contact with, say two volunteers on the ground. Committee members would welcome questions from anyone who might be able to contribute in some way, especially if they live in Area 1A. Jenny is in ongoing discussions with Area Secretaries, past and present, about the part of Area 1A that Bury took over temporarily as a favour a few years ago, in order to reduce the size of the Bury area, to make it more manageable. She had also advised Area Secretary that, in our present circumstances, no support could continue to be given to John Andrews – no longer living in our area.

Jenny's report included details about Flempton Path, Ampton Water and its' still closed bridge, FP 13 at Great Livermore, Great Barton FP 21, West Row FP 2 path near Mildenhall and Open Rights at the Euston Estate for the next 6 years.

Jenny also reported from Zoom meetings for us from the Suffolk Area Council. The 2026 Area AGM will be held in Lavenham village hall.

At this point the Chair expressed everyone's thanks to Jenny for her outstanding work for the committee in many ways and a presentation of a card and a gift voucher was made.

10: Appt. of Area Council Representatives(2): Tom Berry and Val Conaboy unanimously elected. Proposed - Jenny Bradin; Seconded – Gail Mead.

11: Appt. of Examiner of Accounts: Ralph Brighton elected unanimously. Proposed – Cath Anderson; Seconded – Richard Stammers.

12: Election of Officers and Committee:

Chair: Val Conaboy elected unanimously. Proposed- Tony Rowe; Seconded – Chris Flood.

The other remaining committee members were voted en bloc: Chris Flood, Sue Hawthorn, Mark Broughton, Tom Berry, Lynne Bambury and Tony Rowe. Elected unanimously. Proposed: Dave Hodgkinson; Seconded: Jane Warren.

There is a vacancy for a footpath officer.

13: A.O.B. : Rosie Perham thanked the Chair and all the committee for all their work over the preceding 12 months on behalf of the meeting.

Tom Berry suggested that anyone who has ideas for further social events should talk to committee members.

Sue Hawthorn informed the meeting that she and John were planning to run an Autumn Quiz in 2026.

Tony Rowe expressed thanks to all the sub-group involved with the April Eastbourne holiday planning.

Meeting closed 12.25.