



RAMBLERS

Oxfordshire

**Ramblers' Association, Oxfordshire Area
Minutes of the 46th Annual General Meeting
13.30 hours
20 January 2024**

The Chair introduced the guest speaker Lucy Armitage of the Board of Trustees who gave a presentation in which she discussed the following topics:

Walk Leaders' Handbook: Lucy reported that the first draft of the Handbook had received over 900 responses from Walk Leaders. She stressed that the working group had listened to the Walk Leaders' concerns and as a result the Handbook had been reduced from 37 pages down to 8. The Handbook will be for guidance only and will not be mandatory. Zoom sessions have been organised over the next few weeks to update Group Chairs and Cluster Group members on the changes, with a final rollout in the Spring.

Walks Manager: Lucy explained that Walks Manager was still being developed. In addition, the volunteer database Assemble, which is widely viewed as not being fit for purpose, is being reevaluated. However, with only six IT staff progress is slow. Feedback on what users require is important. She recommended watching the WM Status page <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/walks-manager-website-status>.

Ramblers New Strategy: the 10-year strategy plan was approved at the Extraordinary General Meeting in November with 79 for and 20 against. The next stage will be to develop the metrics for monitoring the success of the new strategy.

The Chair thanked Lucy for her talk and welcomed everyone to the 46th Oxfordshire Ramblers AGM.

Attendance: Present: Richard Birch (Chair & Walks Programme Coordinator), John Gordon (Vice Chair) Rosemary Williams (General Secretary), Dawn Pezzella (Treasurer), David Godfrey (Footpath Secretary), Terry Pollard (Walking Environment & Access Officer), Wendy Mannix (Membership Secretary), Pat Lonergan (Website Officer), and 29 members of the Association.

1. **Apologies for absence.** Ross Maloney (Ramblers Chief Executive), Sir Muir Gray (Oxfordshire Ramblers President), Jane Foster (OX), Steve Walde (T&W), David and Jocelyne Boyle (VoWH), Audrey Parsons (T&W), Peter Skuse (VoWH), Dave Cavanagh (VoWH), and Bob Harrison (VoWH).

2. **Approval of the minutes of the previous 2023 AGM**

Amendment: Item 6.2 change "Membership Representative" to "Members' Representative".

Proposed by John Gordon, **Seconded** by Pat Lonergan. The minutes were **APPROVED** nem con.

3. **To consider matters arising from the minutes** – None.

4. **To receive the Annual Report:**

The Chair noted that the full Annual Report, including reports from each of the Groups, was available on the Oxfordshire Ramblers website. The Chair gave an overview of the work of the Area Council over the past year.

5. **To receive the Treasurer's Report:**

The Chair presented the annual accounts for the year ending 30 September 2023. There were no questions. The Annual Report (including the Treasurer's Report) were **APPROVED** nem con

Proposed by Alie Hagedoorn **Seconded** by Terry Pollard

6. **To elect the officers of the Area Council:**

6.1. **President:** Professor Sir Muir Gray: **Proposed** by Judith Wardle **Seconded** by Elaine Steane **elected** nem con

6.2. **Officers:**

The Chair thanked Wendy Mannix (Membership Secretary) and David Godfrey (Footpath Secretary), members of Area Council during the past year, who were not seeking re-election.

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The following officers were **Proposed** by David Baker **Seconded** by Alie Hagedoorn and **elected** nem con:

Chair Richard Birch; **Vice Chair:** John Gordon; **General Secretary** Rosemary Williams; **Treasurer** Dawn Pezzella; **Footpaths Secretary (North)** Terry Pollard; **Website Officer** Pat Lonergan; **Walks Coordinator** Richard Birch; **Membership Secretary** Pat Lonergan; **Walking Environment & Access Officer** Terry Pollard; **Members' Representative (without portfolio)** Steve Walde.

It was noted that the positions of **Footpath Secretary (South)**, **Publicity Officer**, and a second **Members' Representative** are vacant.

David Tole, Parish Path Warden Network Co-ordinator, is co-opted to the Area Council.

6.3. **Delegates to General Council (2):** Richard Birch, Alie Hagedoorn **Proposed** by Wendy Mannix **Seconded** by John Gordon **Approved** nem com

6.4. **Group Representatives on Area Council:** These members have been nominated at their own AGMs:

Banbury & North Oxfordshire, Steve Cox; **Bicester & Kidlington**, Russell Thompson;
Didcot & Wallingford, David Baker; **Henley & Goring**, Alie Hagedoorn; **Hike Oxfordshire**, David Homer;
Oxford, Jane Foster; **Oxon Weekend Walkers**, Jane Pearson; **Thame & Wheatley**, Mike Smith;
Vale of White Horse, John Gordon; **West Oxfordshire**, Rosemary Clegg.

Proposed by Terry Pollard **Seconded** by Pat Lonergan **Accepted** nem com

7. **To appoint an Independent Examiner:** Stuart Kenner **Proposed** by Richard Birch **Seconded** by John Gordon **Approved** nem com

8. **To consider motions:** notice of which have been given in writing to the General Secretary in accordance with Rule 12vi of the constitution. No motions had been received.

9. **To consider proposals, which have been sent in advance of the meeting:** none were received.

10. AOB:

10.1. The Chair reported that a new Flexi-Group 'Oxfordshire Strollers' had been launched in December.

10.2. David Godfrey retired as Area Footpath Secretary at the AGM. He has been a Footpath Secretary for over 45 years, first for Bicester & Kidlington Group and then, for the past few decades, for the whole of Oxfordshire. The Chair presented David with a Certificate signed by Ross Maloney, Ramblers Chief Executive, in recognition of David's outstanding dedication to the role.

11. **Closing Remarks:** Richard thanked Lucy Armitage, Ramblers Trustee, West Oxfordshire Group for hosting the AGM, and Judith Wardle for leading the walk in the morning; and all those present for attending.

The meeting closed at 14:58

Signed

Date.....