

10 General Council issues

There had been no proposals for motions to be put to General Council.

It was **agreed** that Peter James and Julian White be delegates to General Council, and Łukasz Banka and Celia Macey would attend as visitors, funded by the Area. Richard May would be attending as a Trustee.

12 Discussion items

- 12.1 Richard May asked if there was a volunteer to collate walks published in the EDP into a book for sale. It was noted that all material was already held electronically, and the task was to get it into a format for publication. There were no immediate volunteers.
- 12.2 Tony Smith referred to the substantial numbers of members in 'no group' and hoped that something could be done to get people into Groups. Derek Goddard confirmed that all new members received a welcoming letter, in which it was made clear that they could walk with any Group. Ken Hawkins noted that Area Council had discussed this previously, as it was believed that the issue arose mainly for those joining on line, and the Area had asked Central Office to make it clearer on the website that joining a specific Group did not in any limit their ability to walk with any Group (in or out of the Area), but nothing had come of this.
- 12.3 Richard May drew attention to his 'Help us help you' cards and invited people to take a supply to give to walkers they met.

13 Update from Ramblers' Trustee

Ronnie Forbes introduced himself and led an interactive session in which he encouraged questions and interruptions. He told the meeting that RA was going through a process of modernisation, and the Chief Executive, Vanessa Griffiths, has now assembled an impressive staff team, carrying through the digital transformation work. After referring to an updated Pathwatch app and the work on Don't Lose Your Way, he invited discussion on why membership had fallen steadily for the last 10 years, citing the statistic that we had only about 01.% of the walking population. He referred to piecemeal approaches in the past, while RA was now asking why do people join and/or stay as members, and why do others not join? One issue was to ensure that we were welcoming to all new or potential members. Neil Cliff suggested that people would consider what they got for their money, to which Ronnie replied that we were the only organisation defending the right to walk. His final topic was training for walk leaders, which he encouraged the Area to participate in.

The meeting closed with renewed thanks to Fakenham Group for the arrangements and refreshments.



The morning walk around Binham

Please keep this agenda and bring it to the AGM

The 46th Annual General Meeting of the Norfolk Area of the Ramblers' Association will take place at **1400 on Saturday 8 February 2020** at Great Witchingham Village Hall, Hubbard's Loke, Great Witchingham NR9 5AZ - TG09871851. There will be a short walk (5 miles) leaving at 1100 from the Hall: walkers should bring a packed lunch. Teas/coffees will be available at lunch time and after the AGM.

AGENDA

- 1 **Chair's introduction and welcome**
- 2 **Apologies for absence**
- 3 **To approve the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting**
- 4 **Matters arising from the minutes**
8.3 - 2026 claims
- 5 **Treasurer's Report** and approval of annual accounts for year ending 30 September 2019 - Peter James
- 6 **Appointment of Independent Examiner (Auditor) for 2020/21**
- 7 **Reports of other Officers**
 - 7.1 Secretary and Minutes Secretary - Ken Hawkins
 - 7.2 Membership Secretary - Barbara Cattermole
 - 7.3 Footpath Co-ordinator and Rights of Way Sub-Committee - Ian Mitchell
 - 7.4 Working Parties - Peter James
 - 7.5 External Communications Officer - Marita Bulto
 - 7.6 Internal Communications Officer - vacant
 - 7.7 Area Access Officer - vacant
 - 7.8 Volunteer Co-ordinator - vacant
 - 7.9 Walks Features Editor - Sue Walker
- 8 **Election of Area Council Members for 2020/21**

Current officers willing to stand again as listed below. Other nominations are welcome.

Chair	Richard May
Vice Chair	Ian Mitchell
Secretary and Minutes Secretary	Ken Hawkins
Treasurer	Peter James
Membership Secretary	Barbara Cattermole
Footpath Co-ordinator	Ian Mitchell
External Communications Officer	Marita Bulto
Internal Communications Officer	vacant
Area Access Officer	vacant
Volunteer Co-ordinator	vacant
Committee Members	Sheila Bulmer, Julian White, Sue Walker
- 9 **General Council - 4-5 April 2020, Bristol**
 - 9.1 To consider any motions to be proposed to General Council
 - 9.2 To elect delegates and visitors to General Council
- 10 **Discussion Items / Questions for Area Council**
- 11 **Don't Lose Your Way - Jack Cornish, RA Programme Manager**
- 12 **Update from Ramblers' Trustee**

Please keep these minutes and bring them with you to the next AGM.

The Ramblers' Association Norfolk Area

Minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting of the Norfolk Area of the Ramblers' Association held on Saturday 9 February 2019 at 2pm at Binham Village Hall

Present: Chair, Richard May and 37 other members

1 Chairman's welcome and introduction Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking Fakenham Group for hosting the meeting and leading the morning's walk. He also welcomed Trustee Ronnie Forbes to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Łukasz Banka, Liam D'Souza, Malcolm Palmer, Suzanne Stratton and Keith and Linda Thomas.

3 Minutes of the 2018 AGM It was **agreed** that the minutes be signed and dated as a true record.

4 Matters arising There were no matters arising from the minutes

5 Chair's report - Richard May

Richard referred to the composite Annual Report which had been circulated to all present, noting that it had been a good year for Norfolk, and mentioning particularly

- the idea of developing a special interest walking group, perhaps like the Suffolk "Pramblers" group for parents with push chairs, prams or small children,
- the potential market of people who are benefitting from the work that we do, but are not members, and
- the Festival of Winter Walks, including 21 Christmas day walkers.

6 Treasurer's report for the financial year ending 30 September 2018 - Peter James

The Income and Expenditure Account was circulated to all present. Total income had been £13,092, expenditure £18,931. He noted that we had received the full budget requested. In answer to a question, Peter noted that Area income from RA was according to his requested budget, while Group funding was based on £95 plus 95p per member. It was proposed by Vic Cocker, seconded by Ian Mitchell and **agreed nem con** to approve the financial report.

7 Appointment of the Independent Examiner (Auditor) for 2019/20

It was proposed by Neil Cliff, seconded by Ian Mitchell and **agreed nem con** that Christina Brooker be once more appointed as the Independent Examiner.

8 Reports of other officers - the full reports are included in the composite Annual Report

8(1) **Area Secretary** - Ken Hawkins

Ken referred to the continuing work of influencing Norfolk County Council, some through his input with Vic Cocker on the Norfolk Local Access Forum (whose PRoW subgroup also included Ian Mitchell and Neil Cliff); the issues which had arisen from Natural England's report on the England Coast Path Weybourne to Hunstanton stretch; 2026 work; and the Area's input on how RA handled the General Data Protection Regulation.

8(2) **Area Membership Secretary** - Derek Goddard

In his final report, Derek noted that Area membership had again fallen slightly during the year. Richard thanked him for his 9 years' work, for which Derek received a well deserved round of applause. Richard then went on to say that he had stolen an idea from Cornwall Area, and had an award to make to the Group with the largest percentage increase in membership over the last year: the award went to Hike Norfolk with a 14% increase and was received on its behalf by Julian Walker (right).



8(3) **Area Footpath Co-ordinator & Rights of Way Subcommittee Secretary** - Ian Mitchell

Ian referred to a table of path changes from 2017 to date, which was included in the Annual Report. He then drew attention to two specific paths: Pockthorpe Lane (where an order had been made for BOAT, and landowner objections were now being considered) and Earsham bridge (where he had proposed that a new path be established rather than adopting any of the County's unsatisfactory proposals). Ian went on to note that there had been a few people newly interested in work to claim rights of way before 2026, but most were starting with little or no knowledge. Tony Smith expressed concern that the numbers of people working on this was very low and as things stood, we would not claim all the routes

we should. It was **agreed** to refer this to the next Area Council meeting. Ian concluded by stating that there was a need to plan succession for his role, and suggested that the Suffolk Area pattern of footpath secretaries covering a range of issues in patches of parishes might be a good approach; this too was remitted to Area Council for further consideration.

8(4) **Working Parties' report** - Peter James

Peter's report was included in the document circulated. He sought volunteers for further work at Wreningham and Castle Acre.

8(5) **External and Internal Communications** - Julian White

Having thanked all involved in supporting the Festival of Winter Walks, Julian went on to note the increasing online competition from new walking groups, and the ongoing work to standardise entries in the Newsletter. Neil Cliff asked about associate membership for other groups, such as U3A, as this would increase political clout. Both Richard and Ronnie said this was under consideration by RA, as the purpose of affiliation was no longer clear. Richard thanked Julian for the work he had done, noting that he was standing down, but would remain on Area Council and continue to feed in his ideas.

8(6) **Publications Manager** - Peter James

Peter repeated that sales of walks books had now come to the point where we get very little from them, and questioned the value of this post for the future. In the discussion that followed, it was noted that we had a current request for a volunteer to collate the EDP walks into a book, and that there was also publication online. It was felt that a potential job remains, even though Peter was standing down.

8(7) **Volunteer Co-ordinator** - vacant: no report.

8(8) **Area Access Officer** - vacant: no report.

8(9) **Walks Features Editor** - Sue Walker

Sue noted the continuing work to submit walks every week to the EDP, and thanked all who had assisted in this. She noted that there had been problems on some walks, though all had been resolved.

8(10) **Group reports**

The Group reports were noted.

9 Elections of Area Council Members

Richard May stood down, and Ian Mitchell took the Chair. There being no other nominations, Alan Bowell proposed that Richard be re-elected: this was seconded by Sue Walker and it was **carried nem con**. Richard then resumed the Chair to conclude the remaining business.

In the absence of other nominations, those remaining posts for which the current postholder was willing to continue, were considered *en bloc*. It was proposed by Richard May, seconded by Vic Cocker and **agreed nem con** to accept all nominations.

Barbara Cattermole was nominated as Membership Secretary by Tony Smith, and seconded by Sue Walker, and **elected nem con**.

Celia Macey offered herself as Internal Communications Officer. She was formally proposed by Richard May, seconded by Julian Walker, and duly **elected nem con**.

Neil Cliff proposed, Vic Cocker seconded, and it was **agreed nem con** that Julian Walker and Sheila Bulmer be **elected** as a committee members.

The list of officers elected is as follows.

Chair	Richard May
Vice Chair	Ian Mitchell
Treasurer	Peter James
Secretary/Minutes Secretary	Ken Hawkins
Membership Secretary	Barbara Cattermole
Footpath Co-ordinator	Ian Mitchell
Internal Communications Officer	Celia Macey
External Communications Officer	vacant
Publications Manager	vacant
Volunteer Co-ordinator	vacant
Area Access Officer	vacant
Committee Members	Sheila Bulmer, Sue Walker, Julian Walker