

ALTRINCHAM & DISTRICT RAMBLING CLUB

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday, 7th November 2024, at 7.30pm

VENUE All Saints Church Hall, Hale Barns.

PRESENT 46 Members signed the register.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Colette & Leo Garner, Pauline & Steve Glover, Jean Hibbert, Jean Lewis, Roy Merrit, Aptar Sandhu-Taylor, Zoe & Edward Spark and Keith Wykes.

2. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on Thursday 9th November 2023

The minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 9th November 2023, were accepted as a correct record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

The Chair, Beverly Harrison (BHa) advised that any matters arising would be covered in the current agenda.

4. President's Opening Remarks – Heather Wykes (HW)

HW began by welcoming everyone to the AGM and thanked all the committee members for their hard work over the previous twelve months.

HW highlighted the importance of seeking new ways of introducing new members to the club.

HW also stressed the need for encouraging members to volunteer to lead walks and that if help was required then this could be arranged, especially for those members who were considering leading for the first time.

HW explained to those present that during the coming year discussions would take place regarding the intended celebration of the club's 70th year in 2026. Some ideas regarding such events had already been received and at a later date assistance would be requested from the general membership.

HW advised that Jenny Rydell had stepped down from her role of assisting in the organisation of the Club's coach trips and thanked Jenny for her hard work during the last year.

5. Reports

CHAIR - Beverley Harrison (BHa)

BHa thanked Ruth Worsley for taking the minutes of the AGM.

BHa advised that Colette Garner (CG) had now successfully taken over the role of Programme Secretary and that Jenny Rydell (JR) had taken over the role of Wednesday Assistant Walks Organiser.

BHa confirmed that four committee meetings had been held since the last AGM.

BHa thanked the Walks Organisers for continuing to provide a varied walking programme over the last twelve months.

BHa stressed the need for the membership to support the walk organisers where possible with existing leaders providing additional walks or by members offering to lead a walk for the first time.

BHa re-enforced the comments made by HW regarding the club's anniversary year in 2026. Any suggestions or ideas of how to celebrate this special year would be gratefully received.

TREASURER – Terry Clarke (TC)

TC advised those present that they should be able to see a copy of the club financial statement which had been distributed.

TC explained that the club ended the year with a surplus of just over £521 and that when the coach trips and the club holiday were taken into consideration this would then leave a surplus of £450.

TC outlined the intention, with the increase in on-line banking, of the committee starting the process of appointing the General Secretary as a second corporate administrator. A corporate administrator would be able to access the club's bank account on-line and in this instance would be able to see who had paid for a coach trip seat or a club holiday place by bank transfer, with this information then being made available to the relevant organiser. TC advised that this would be very helpful in his role as club Treasurer.

TC thanked members of the committee for informing him promptly of any payments made into the club's bank account, with a special thank you being made to the auditors, John Beardmore and John Jagger for their diligence in checking the figures and for signing those off as a true representation of the club's financial position.

TC advised those present that membership subscriptions could be paid to him at the end of the meeting.

TC provided those present with the opportunity to ask questions, but there were none asked.

AUDITOR – John Beardmore (JB) assisted by John Jagger (JoJ)

JB confirmed that the accounts represented a true reflection of the club's financial position and thanked JoJ for his assistance.

LEGACIES FUND – Beverly Harrison (BHa)

BHa explained that Elsie Edwards had notified the committee of her intention to stand down as a member of the Legacies Fund Committee.

BHa advised that going forward the membership of the Legacies Fund Committee would be herself, Terry Clarke and Gill Winn.

BHa outlined that the intention of the Legacies Fund Committee was to use some of the available funds to facilitate training sessions in 2025, and 70th anniversary events in 2026.

GENERAL SECRETARY – Aptar Sandhu-Taylor (AST)

No report.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – Monica Beardmore (MB)

MB advised those present that very little had changed in the previous twelve months. The membership numbers had continued to decrease although some of the new members were had proved to be very keen and increasingly active.

MB explained that at the end of the 2023/2024 year the club had 192 members compared with 201 members at the same time the previous year.

MB highlighted that during the past year 22 members had not renewed their membership and that sadly 2 members had passed away.

MB advised that during the 2023/2024 year the club had welcomed 15 new members and had also received 54 membership enquiries, the majority of which were the result of web searches on the club website, however, overall, the most successful way in which the club had recruited new members was by personal recommendation from the existing members.

MB concluded by thanking the Walks Organisers and Walk Leaders who throughout the year had provided walks for the members on both Wednesdays and Sundays.

PROGRAMME SECRETARY – Colette Garner (CG), report read by Beverly Harrison

CG advised that she had taken over the role of Programme Secretary from Phil Worsley in February 2024.

CG thanked Phil Worsley for his excellent support and ongoing assistance when required.

CG advised that the number of printed circulars had gradually reduced and was now only 14 per month.

CG Thanked Judy Bailey for her continued support in the collection and distribution by post of the printed circulars.

CG also thanked all the Walk Leaders for their helpful submission of their on-line walk submission forms by the required cut-off date. This being the 10th of the preceding month.

CG explained that that on occasions when, for various and often understandable reasons, the cut-off date for walk submissions had been missed, the workload for the Programme Secretary was increased.

CG thanked members for the items sent to her for inclusion in the “Other News” section of the circulars, most of these being sent in a clear and concise way.

HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER – Beverly Harrison (BHa)

BHa advised that information on the club’s health and safety protocol was displayed in a prominent position on the club website.

BHa highlighted that in the past year members had again been encouraged to ensure that when out walking with the club that they were in possession of the club’s “In Case of Emergency” form.

BHa explained that 2 members had sustained fractures in the past year due to accidents whilst out walking with the club, both accidents having occurred in very muddy conditions. On 14th February 2024 Beverly Harrison fell and fractured her wrist, and on 8th April 2024 Muriel Lowther fell and fractured her ankle. Both Beverly and Muriel made good recoveries and were now back walking with the club.

SUNDAY WALKS ORGANISER – Phil Worsley (PW)

PW advised those present that Sunday walking had continued to provide the membership nearly always 2 options of walks during the past year. This being despite the perennial problem of securing leaders.

PW advised that there had been 86 Sunday walks in the past year:

- 45 “Harder Walks
- 2 “Intermediate Walks
- 39 “Easier Walks

PW advised that the overall participation in Sunday walks was slightly down on last year, and highlighted his particular concerns regarding the drop in participation by members on the “harder” walks, with some walks having 5 or less taking part.

PW highlighted the fact that too much was being done by too few in terms of walk leading and that this was likely to continue in the 2024/2025 season.

PW advised that there were no reported health and safety issues on any of the Sunday walks.

PW advised those present of the changes made to the walk grading system in the past year, and the reasons for the changes.

PW concluded his report by thanking:

- Heather Wykes for her work in securing walk leaders for the “easier” walks.
- All members and guests who had participated in the Sunday walks.
- Those members who had given him constructive advice/criticism.
- All the leaders of the Sunday walks in the 2024/2025 season.

WEDNESDAY WALKS ORGANISER – Jill Weir (JW) report read by Beverly Harrison.

JW advised that the Wednesday walks programme continued to provide members with an option of 2 walks and on occasion 3 walks on Wednesdays.

JW advised that in the past year there had been a total of 95 walks:

- 45 Harder walks
- 4 Intermediate walks
- 46 Easier walks

JW explained that during the past year 1 member had suffered a fractured wrist during a Wednesday walk and that the member had made a full recovery and had resumed walking.

JW commented that she had obtained a full programme for the harder walks over the previous 12 months and that with the 2025 Leader Training sessions due to take place more leaders would be recruited for all levels of walks.

JW and Jenny Rydell thanked all members who had kindly led walks Wednesday walks during the past year.

COACH TRIP ORGANISER – Jill Jagger (JJ)

JJ thanked the Coach Committee for all their hard work over the past 12 months.

JJ thanked Jenny Rydell for her assistance over the years in her role as part of the Coach Committee.

JJ advised that Jenny Rydell had resigned from the Coach Committee and that this role had been filled by Gill Brooks.

JJ advised that 4 coach trips had taken place during the year with visits to Grasmere, Settle, Conway and Church Stretton, all being serviced by Bullocks Coach Company.

JJ explained that the average cost per coach was £950. The Coach Committee had secured 57 seat coaches for the trips and had an average of 53 persons per coach. This had resulted in a net surplus of £40.

JJ referred to an incident on the outward journey to Church Stretton when a replacement coach had to be provided. This had resulted in a 90 minute delay in reaching Church Stretton. Walks still went ahead on this trip and everyone got home safely. After discussions with the coach company a £200 refund had been agreed and this would be offset against the cost of coaches for 2025.

JJ advised that the proposed date for the 2025 trips were:

- Wednesday 7th May - Kirkby Lonsdale
- Sunday 8th June - Bodnant Gardens and Llandudno (social trip)
- Wednesday 2nd July - Appleby
- Sunday 27th July - Hawes
- Wednesday 3rd September – Llangollen

JJ advised that quotes had been received for 55 and 61 seater coaches for 2025 and that having considered the costs a small increase in the cost per seat on trips may be required.

JJ requested a show of hands from those present regarding the need for a coffee stop on the outward journey of each trip. A majority agreed that this idea would be trialled.

JJ notified those present that in the event of a member leaving property on a coach that the member must contact the coach company directly.

JJ requested that any suggestions for the venues of the 2026 coach trips be sent to herself.

HOLIDAY ORGANISER – Beryl Hunwick (BHu)

BHu advised that 48 club members had attended the 2024 club walking holiday to the Isle of Man and that despite the rough ferry crossing on the outward journey everyone survived the experience. The hotel was good and the staff were very helpful. The local walking guides proved to be of an excellent standard and the scenery and views seen during the walks were again excellent.

BHu also commented that the coach driver on the Isle of Man trip was both friendly and helpful.

BHu advised that the 2025 holiday would be to Ilfracombe, departing on Saturday, April 12th and that the Imperial Hotel would be used. BHu and PW were already busy in sorting out walks and associated leaders for the holiday.

BHu advised that the balance payment for the 2025 holiday was required to be paid by members by December 31st and that cheques should be made payable to Altrincham Rambling Club.

SOCIAL ORGANISER – Heather Wykes (HW)

HW provided those present with a brief overview of social events arranged for the 2024/2025 club season:

- Thursday 28th November 24' – Lunch at Aspires Restaurant, Trafford College
- Wednesday 4th December '24 – Christmas Walk & Lunch at the Knot Inn, Rushton Spencer
- Monday 9th December 24' – Christmas Walk and Lunch at Blaze Farm

- Thursday 12th December '24 – Christmas Lunch at The Vinery, Bruntwood Park, Cheadle
- Tuesday 25th February '25 – A talk by Keith Warrender on the Kinder Trespass at Timperley Village Club 4 p.m.
- Friday 21st March '25 – The Manchester Toilet Tour. Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

GOODWILL SECRETARY – Jeanne Gregory (JG) & Lesley Short (LSh)

LS advised those present that during the past year:

15 Get Well cards had been sent to members

11 Milestone Birthday cards had been sent to members including 1 to the Club

President Heather Wykes, who had celebrated her 70th birthday.

JG advised those present of members and former members who had sadly passed away during the previous 12 months:

- Phil Brownhill – member
- Ann Macaulay – member
- David Stonehewer – member
- Elizabeth Downie – former member
- Pam Mitchell – former member

WEBMASTER – Phil Worsley (PW)

PW advised those present that the club website and associated Facebook page had continued to run well over the past year, attracting interest from existing and potential new members. There had been no major issues but a few of the usual minor ones which had been dealt with.

PW reminded those present that the password for access to the “Members Area” of the website would change at the close of business on January 31st, 2025 and that the new membership card for the coming season would have both the username and the new password printed on it.

PW advised that ongoing housekeeping of the website continued on a regular basis in order to keep it real time, fresh and interesting, and as an example of this highlighted the Forward Walks Programme which was kept as up-to-date as he could possibly make it.

PW thanked Judy Bailey for her work in assisting members in their use of the on-line walk submission form.

PW ended his report by asking members to continue to use the club website and asked those that were not using it to give it a try for it was there where they would find lots of information about the club and its activities.

6. Election of Officials

BHa announced that the 2 Ordinary Committee Members were up for re-election and proposed that Les Stockton be appointed for a further 2 years and that Judy Bailey be appointed for a further 1 year. Those present at the meeting accepted the proposal. BHa announced that all other Committee Members were continuing in their roles.

INTERVAL 8.15-8.45

Following the interval BHa thanked HW for organising the wonderful refreshments.

7. Donations

TC confirmed that the following organisations had received a donation of £80 from the club.

- The Peak & Northern Footpath Society
- The Buxton Mountain Rescue Team
- The Lake District Search & Rescue Association
- Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation
- Oldham Mountain Rescue Team
- Rossendale & Pendle Mountain Rescue Team
- Edale Mountain Rescue Team

8. Honorary Membership

BHa informed those present that there were no new additions to the list of Honorary Members.

9. Any other Business

- a. BHa reminded those present that that the Map Custodian, Chris Sadler, could provide maps should any be required for the planning of club walks.
- b. BHa advised those present to access the club website for up-to-date information regarding leader training sessions for 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

Date of next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM will be held at All Saints Church Hall, Hale Barns on Thursday 6th November 2025 at 7.30 p.m.