

**Annual General Meeting of Bury St Edmunds Ramblers' Group
held at 10.30am on 6th November 2021 at Southgate Community Centre.**

Attendance 35

Rosie welcomed everyone to the meeting and mentioned some of the members who had sent apologies.

1. Apologies for Absence:- as listed.

2. Minutes of AGM held by zoom on 7th November 2020 agreed and signed. Proposed by Dawn Roberts, seconded by Chris Harrison.

3. Matters Arising:- None

4. Chairman's Annual report:- It has continued to be a very difficult time for many of our group since last year, and very saddened by the loss of Steve Murphy who died on Easter Sunday. Thoughts of other members with health issues. Had been very much a stop-start time at the end of last year and beginning of this, as we came out of lockdown and then back in again – then resuming walks again in April with limited group sizes initially in fairness to leaders and participants and to the community. There's always been great interaction within the group, and appreciation expressed to those who've kept the buzz going within the limitations of lockdown and since, including through our group Facebook. July saw the lifting of all government restrictions but Ramblers recognise that it's important for everyone to feel comfortable with walk arrangements, and numbers can continue to be specified – although we're steadily seeing a return to our normal format for walks, with very few currently requiring to be booked in advance. Possibility of Pancake Day walk & lunch 1st March; Coast to Cloisters long distance walk on hold from last year, hoping to rearrange next year. Appreciation to those who organised Week of Walks 2021, certificates awarded.

Rosie reported on the membership for Chris who was unable to attend. Membership has been fairly static at around 385 during the year, 38 have left and 46 joined, includes affiliated members. There are 136 Facebook members. Rosie handed over to Julia for programme update: since the beginning of April there have been 86 walks. Tuesdays 30, Fridays 22 and Saturdays 34. More leaders are needed, hope to have a Programme Meeting in the new year. David Green had emailed asking if there could be a compendium of local walks to help new leaders, could be discussed then. Julia thanked Dave H for his help with online arrangements including walks calendar.

Rosie explained still impracticable to print and send out programmes as previously, initially because of covid uncertainties but also now in the face of rising costs and environmental considerations, but reassuring that those not online are participating in high number of walks; mentioned the benefits of using the Ramblers App register in giving Central Office and our group, walks and attendance information.

Paid tribute to Dave's huge support to the group as Deputy Chairman and on the technical side: Dave spoke about communications including updates by email and asked people to sign up on website to enable them to receive information via Mailchimp.

Fun awards presented to Chris Flood and Rosalind Round for all they have contributed to the life of the group in different ways.

Man of the match award to Ron West presented with "Walking Class Heroes" book in appreciation for all round support over many years.

6. Treasurer's Annual Report:- Richard presented the financial figures for both accounts up to 30th September with on screen charts. Main account, Central Office allocation £350. book sales £40, Walking Partnership £10. £280 carried forward to 2022 to be spent on footpath matters. Total £400. Expenses, newsletters £145, postage £66, printing £25.20, zoom meetings £86.34 and admin £36.27. Total £358.81. Bank balance £686.91. Social account: Llangollen holiday, income £20,820.50, expenses £20,801.60, surplus £18.90. Costs breakdown, hotel 68.14%, coaches 19.23%, Secret Hills 8.71%, stationery 0.20%, Lichfield tours 0.89%, recces 2.82%. Hotel cost at 2019 prices. Some booking cancellations were received partly based on Covid concerns. Mil-Ken Coaches and Secret Hills Walking were paid by their due date. Delay by hotel in sending final invoice enabled part refunds to be made based on date of cancellation and only on accommodation element. This was a one-off situation. Only one other transaction of £20.30 leaving a loss of £1.40. Bank balance £4,792.23, committed IOW funds £3,351.52 surplus £1,440.71 built up over last 11 years. Anticipating spending some in year ahead. Thanked Paul Harrison accounts examiner. Accounts proposed by Tony Rowe seconded by Carole Cannell. All agreed, Richard thanked by Rosie, appreciation expressed by everyone. Richard announced that he and Shirley will be standing down at next year's AGM after many years on the committee.

Ideal if someone would come forward during the year with view to taking over from Richard as Group Treasurer.

7. Footpath Secretaries' Reports:-

Jenny unable to be here so Lynne presented Jenny's report for Area 1A:

Network Rail Level Crossings Closures: Inspector's final report published, Ramblers objections upheld so none of our crossings will be closed; Central Office had congratulated all those concerned in all the work involved – namely Jenny and Derek in our area (Applause given) Cattishall Crossing: ongoing from 2020 planning application for new footbridge over the railway at Cattishall, from St Joseph Homes application for 1,375 dwellings, northeast of Bury Road, Gt Barton, negotiations with SCC, developers will finance; Gt Barton Footpath 21: ongoing issue for 3 years, negotiations continue, suggestion made to parish council for network of paths, and Footpath 21 is part of this plan. Mallards Bridge, Mildenhall: after 4 years of negotiation work has just started preparatory to replacing bridge! Green Ixworth group formed to claim footpaths including John Andrews claim in progress. Updates given re Ingham, Hinderclay, Wortham and at Shelterhouse Corner, also Fen Meadow Compensation Study, re loss of marshes at Sizewell, possibility of Pakenham Fen extension.

Lynne then gave her own report for Area 1B:

Winter had been very wet, muddy paths compounded by lockdown walkers, farming concerns. Chevington FP18 and Ickworth FP1 now on definitive map and OS map but still blocked, there is a fence to climb over! Plans for new West Suffolk Hospital, impressed by location. Roley Wilson liaison SLAF and Ramblers, would like ramblers to become proactive with new developments to encourage green corridors. A11 5-Ways roundabout, highways want to increase the flow of traffic, needs a safe crossing especially if speeds are going to be increased! Pipeline Bexwell to Bury, awaiting notice of any temporary ROW closures. Bury FP22 to be moved 50m south to enable directional lighting for Air Ambulance helipad. FP36 Rougham not yet on definitive map, delay due to covid – and chickens!

Rosie thanked Lynne and Jenny for all their work reflected in two superb presentations **(NB Full reports available on our Group Website)**

Additional to her report, Rosie gave resumé on screen of our "April Breaks" since 2010, 12 holidays arranged, 690 bookings made by almost 200 participants, augmenting our programme, enhancing group cohesion, and giving members new confidence in their walking abilities. Tribute paid to Richard and Shirley who had generously helped and supported throughout, presented with NT book "Coast and Countryside".

9. Area Council Representative:- Jenny Bradin had agreed to attend. Proposed by Richard Stammers, seconded by Joan Wadsworth.

10. Appointment of Accounts Examiner:- Paul Harrison has agreed to continue. Proposed by Dawn Roberts, seconded by Ralph Brighton.

8. Election of Officers & Committee:- Gavin Monk had stood down during the year, so vacancy for technical officer, Rosie standing down as Chairman, all remaining members of committee happy to continue, but Dave announced he will be standing down at next year's AGM although happy to continue running website. Committee excluding Chair voted for en-bloc. Proposed Paul Harrison, seconded Janet Lerwell.

Rosie delighted Cath Anderson has accepted nomination for Chair and brief background given, followed by overview from Cath of her previous experience, on committees as Secretary, Treasurer and as Chair of School Governors, Ramblers member for 6 years, progressing from Friday to Tuesday walks, now mostly Saturday walks. Proposed by Rosie Perham, seconded by Richard Stammers, passed unanimously.

10. Any Other Business:- Cath mentioned Ben Heather, Green Access officer, who is looking for volunteers to put QR codes on finger posts. St Edmund Way – Rosie has been link person, will take on secretary role, projects in progress include information boards at start and finish.

Dave H congratulated Cath as new chairman and made a presentation to Rosie on behalf of the group. Meeting closed at 13.10pm.