

Ipswich & District Ramblers

AGM MINUTES 9th November 2022

Tuddenham Village Hall

	Welcome 39 members present	Actions <i>(initials)</i>
	Apologies: Helen Howe, Sarah Clark, Nora Hydes, Frances Curwen, Ian Martin	
1	Approval of last years AGM Report The minutes of 3 rd November 2021 were approved	
2	Matters Arising / Actions completed There were no matters arising	
3	Presentation of the annual report Chair to include that Alde Valley working group has disbanded, if any member would like to start a working group please let the committee know. Ian gave a report on the last year, detailed below.	
4	Presentation of Statement of Account The accounts were on the tables for members to see. Rumana went through what had changed in the treasurers role over the last 4 years. Details below	
5	Appoint an Independent Examiner Lionel MacKay has agreed to be the independent examiner for 2022/2023	
6	Presentation of the Footpath Sub Committee Report Helen Howe was unable to be at the meeting, so Ian read out her report. Details below.	
7	Appoint Officer Holders and Committee Rumana Zuberi is standing down as treasurer. A nomination had been received from Keith Redfern on 18 th October 2022. Mary Knight Proposed Keith Redfern as treasurer and Sarah Murphy seconded. All other committee members were willing to be re-elected with no other nominations received. Sue Haslam proposed the other committee members, seconded by Eleanor Clark. All members in the room agreed to the nominations. Keith Redfern was welcomed to the committee.	
8	Any other business There was a discussion regarding how to encourage more new walk leaders. One option suggested was for payments or expenses to be made however when put to the group no one felt that this would encourage them to lead. A buddy system was also suggested which had a positive response, those willing to be buddies to contact the committee and a list will be put on the website and on Facebook with those names and contact details.	JM/KM
9	GDPR To record that the Committee agree for their name to appear in all future Minutes and also that they are in agreement for their personal information : name, role on Committee, email address, telephone number, to appear in the Area Directory.	

Chair's Annual Statement Ian Gosden

Welcome to this years AGM and thank you for joining us. The Groups membership now stands at 332, down on last years figure of 347. 17 leavers have been identified by HO to the membership secretary, of which only 2 were known to us. I guess H.O. maybe getting their administration up to date. We have had a steady stream of new people joining us on walks as a trial during the year and gladly at least 9 have joined our fold. Welcome to you all.

We have managed to maintain a varied walk program during the year with the number of walks since early summer almost getting back to pre pandemic levels. There have been a few gaps lately, but I am sure we will continue to provide a varied and full programme going forward. The ramblers are producing new tables with reference to the number of led walks around the country. Over the last 12 months their figures show a total of 181 groups participating. Under the heading "Most Walks" we are shown to have published 93 walks which ranked us 13th in the country. Under the heading "Average Number of Attendees" we are shown to have had an average of 20 and are ranked 3rd in the country. We thank you all for your participation. Best pat yourselves on the back. We would still like to have more Walk leaders. Even doing 3 or 4 a year will spread the task. In the last 12 months 22 members have led walks, with new names appearing in the last few months. We are very grateful and thank all those who have given it a go. I think we have all noticed that in general lifestyles have changed since the pandemic, with home working and social activities. We see this within our group where the mix and number of members attending walks is changing. Members seem more mobile between local groups more now than previously. We note a preference for medium length walks rather than longer distances. More variety in location will come with an increase in leaders. All this feedback is noted by the committee and we endeavour to try and use it in planning walks.

During the year we held our usual soup and cake walks, all well attended, these were in May, June, which was the Jubilee Walk and July when due to the exceptional weather we did not walk, just enjoyed the food. Thank you to all those involved in organising and bringing the tasty food. After a two year break we resumed the summer holiday. This was based at Shrewsbury, a first visit for many of us and much enjoyed. Thank you to all those involved in organising.

The Facebook group is still very popular with the 75 members registered and nearly every walk has at least few photos posted and receives suitable likes and comments. If members would like to see more information about walks and activities in the future please let us know. The updates to Ramblers systems seems to be taking longer than expected and these are still work in progress. When we know more we will pass it on.

Earlier in the year we had an e mail from a member, Roger Wolfe, advising us that the Ipswich Group was due to celebrate 50 years in 2023. After some searching of archives an article was found in a copy of the Ipswich Evening Star, which identified the inaugural meeting on 14th April 1973. We thank those who spent the time to find the article. We plan to hold small events during the "Birthday" year and the first of these will be a lunch in January.

We will be planning a holiday again this year and after researching several areas the committee have chosen Hastings, Sussex. The dates will be from Monday June 19th to Thursday June 22nd . There will be a maximum of 25 people. We will be e-mailing more details shortly to all members and asking for a show of interest by November 30th.

Rumana Zuberi has decided to step down from the role of treasurer. The committee and members would like to say thank for your time, hard work and commitment to the role during the last four years. Last March, Geoff Knight our Footpath Secretary stood down after many years of industrious service. Without doubt we will miss him and his wealth of knowledge. Fortunately much information has been kept on file, so not all is lost. Geoff is a long standing Ramblers member who has served on committees at several levels. The committee and members would like to thank you for everything you have achieved. To fill the Footpath Secretary's position the committee approached Helen Howe, who has a knowledgeable understanding of footpaths and Right of Way procedures in our area. Luckily for us she agreed and started on the committee in March. In summary thank you to all the committee members for their time and hard work over the past year. Also to all members for joining us on the walks provided.

Treasurer's Report 2021-22 Rumana Zuberi

As you all know this is my last report as a treasurer. The last four years have passed quickly and have been a lot of fun! But it is now time to move on to other interests.

After becoming the treasurer in 2018 for Ipswich & District Group I introduced us to online banking with Unity Bank so that our members could make payments directly for self-funded activities such as Christmas Meals and group meals during Ipswich Ramblers summer holidays.

However, I recognized that whilst the majority of our members preferred this method, others felt more comfortable dealing in cash. For this purpose I set up a Petty Cash Fund for the group to run alongside electronic transactions.

During my time we also switched from submitting manual Annual Accounts to Area to electronic submissions. This included moving away from the yearly paper based Auditor's Independent Financial Report to online reporting.

As you will see from this year's Accounts, we had a deficit of £126.36 at the end of September. This was due to the group only taking our first allocation of £210.00 from Area. I had felt that it was not necessary to have a high bank balance for the sake of it. I am happy to discuss the rest of the accounts after the meeting if anyone has any questions for me.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pene Frost, who could not be here today, for auditing our accounts for the last four years. She has done a superb job but has decided to step down from this role this year.

Turning to the Committee, it has been a pleasure to work with such an experienced and dedicated group. Thank you to Geoff and Jo for their support and for sharing their vast knowledge of the Ramblers rules and policies. Keith was brilliant in helping me navigate the Rambler's IT systems which in my early days had seemed very complicated! At my suggestion we had introduced a "Welcome to New Members" Coffee & Cake morning a couple of years back. Many thanks to Ann and Paul for taking this on board by inviting new members and overseeing these sessions.

Lastly, I would like to wish Keith Redfern the very best as the next Treasurer of the Ipswich & District Group.

Footpath Secretary Report Helen Howe

I must first pay tribute to my predecessor, Geoff Knight, for all the many years of excellent service he gave to the Footpath Committee. His knowledge and understanding of path law was very good and he is a hard act to follow.

There have not been any big new issues causing problems to footpaths. The solar farm at Flowton and Bramford Tye continues to have updates.

Mid Suffolk and Babergh councils are good at sending details of planning applications which might affect rights of way. These are generally mainly minor.

Large housing developments can mean that footpaths are diverted. Once a housing estate is built, there is no longer a path across open countryside, so the value of the path is diminished for walkers.

If you come across a footpath problem, please do report it to Suffolk County Council Rights of Way. There is a link on our group website and it is easy to use.

Alternatively, you can send an email to our dedicated footpaths address. Again details are on the website.

Finally, but not least, I thank Paul Buckles for his help in checking queries and for saving me trawling through lots of online files. His support has been excellent.