

OPEN MOTIONS

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	2019 motions
2019 [1]	Special resolution to rename the agenda committee
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2019 [4]	Developing links with schools, young people and their communities
2019 [5] *	Erosion of riverbank paths
2019 [6]	National planning guidance on green spaces and rights of way
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	Protecting public rights of way (combined response)
2018 [2]	Risk to the adequate maintenance of Rights of Way
2018 [4]	Roadside signage of Public Rights of Way
2017 [4]	Ploughing and Cropping
2017 [5]	Protection of Rights of Way post-Brexit
2016 [8]	Rights of Way Network
2014 [3]	Waymarking
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2018 [3]	Donate-a-Gate Schemes
2017 [6]	Funding for restoring Lost Ways
2016 [9] *	Enhancement of policy on rail crossings & Rights of Way
2014 [7]	Access points to access land

* *Remitted to the board of trustees.*

2019 MOTIONS

2019 [1] Special resolution to rename the agenda committee

It is resolved by way of a special resolution that all occurrences of "agenda committee" in the articles of association and standing orders be replaced by "motions review committee" and that all occurrences of "agenda committee's" in the standing orders be replaced by "motions review committee's".

It is further resolved that all persons elected to the agenda committee by this annual general meeting should serve, instead, on the motions review committee until the close of business of next year's annual general meeting, subject to the provisions of standing order A16.

2019 [3] Public Rights of Way and recruitment

This General Council recognises the benefits to Ramblers of its ability to offer guided walks on a regular basis across the country and the contribution this makes to the health of the participants and the walking of Public Rights of Way. However Council emphasises that an equally important function of the Ramblers is to keep the path network open and, where possible, to extend and improve it.

To this end, Council asks the Board of Trustees to increase the publicity that is given to our charitable objects and particularly to the work we do in improving the quality of PRoW and our campaigning for increased access.

2019 [4] Developing links with schools, young people and their communities

This General Council urges the Board of Trustees to develop methods to work with schools and young people as a means of:

- a) increasing awareness of The Ramblers and opportunities for walking;
- b) developing a new cohort of walkers;
- c) supporting national and local initiatives on public health and childhood obesity.

Council suggests this could be done by:

- a) producing a schools' pack for distribution amongst schools (possibly seeking external funding for this) and material aimed at young people to distribute through their organisations and via social media;
- b) producing a pack for Groups and Areas which may wish to follow up this initiative, bearing in mind the issues of safeguarding.

2019 [5] Erosion of riverbank paths

This General Council is alarmed by the Environment Agency's change of policy not to protect riverbanks in England without full consideration of the potential effect on public rights of way, with the possible consequence that any riverbank paths eroded away would be lost as rights of way. Council is also concerned that Natural Resources Wales might adopt a similar policy. Council notes the precedent of the decision in *R (on application of Gloucester County Council) v Secretary of State for the Environment Transport & the Regions and the Ramblers Association* in 2000, a case in which the Ramblers intervened and were represented in court.

Council further notes that the concept of “spreading room” that applies to the English Coastal Route does not apply to riverbank paths.

Council therefore urges the Board of Trustees to pursue this matter by all available means as a matter of urgency.

2019 [6] National planning guidance on green spaces and rights of way

This General Council notes that the Government has published a 25 year environment plan that seeks to put the environment at the heart of planning and development. Council therefore calls upon the Board of Trustees: (1) to urge the UK, Welsh and Scottish governments to strengthen and amplify the guidance given to Local Authorities so as to put the provision of green spaces and enhancements to public rights of way at the core of the local planning process; (2) to provide Ramblers’ Areas with support in applying these principles at local level.

Such guidance to planning authorities should ensure that the provision of green space and PRowS is considered in the context of the total development planned within the authority’s strategic development plan, rather than on a piecemeal one-off approach.

2019 [7] Diverse and representative General Council

This General Council cherishes our representative democracy and believes in the importance of General Council being both diverse and properly representative of the membership of the charity.

Council therefore requests that the Board of Trustees:

- 1) reviews General Council as an event to ensure it reflects the composition of Ramblers' membership, by identifying and removing actual and potential barriers to participation;
- 2) asks Areas in England, Scotland and Wales to ensure that their appointed Council members are representative of their membership, by examining their practices, including their arrangements for Area governing bodies and their appointment processes;
- 3) reports back to General Council 2020 on its findings and proposals for implementing change across the organisation.

PROTECTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

2018 [2] Risk to the adequate maintenance of Rights of Way

This General Council is concerned that during the current period of financial constraints being placed on Local Authorities with responsibility for Public Rights of Way (PRowS) some may be unable to meet their statutory obligations. This can result in unreasonable delays or longer-term failure to keep PRowS free of obstruction and with infrastructure such as gates, stiles and bridges being inadequately maintained by landowners or themselves. The Board of Trustees is encouraged to continue to make the case to Government, including health and tourism benefits, for necessary resources to be available to local authorities to meet their obligations on PRowS, and to work with others in securing this. In addition, the Board is encouraged to provide support to Areas and Groups to campaign at a local level for adequate levels of appropriately qualified and experienced staff responsible for keeping

PRoWs open including definitive map teams with access to the other resources that they require

2018 [4] Roadside signage of Public Rights of Way

This General Council notes that it is the 50th anniversary of the 1968 Countryside Act requiring English and Welsh highway authorities to signpost public rights of way where they meet with metalled Roads. It further notes that the Pathwatch data indicates that few authorities have complied with the requirements in full. Council therefore requests that the Ramblers gives priority to working with the relevant authorities to bring about a full compliance within the next 5 years as part of the Pathwatch campaign.

2017 [4] Ploughing and Cropping

This General Council calls upon the board of trustees to find ways to reduce the impact of ploughing and cropping on the path network in England and Wales, and to engage with the relevant parties to ensure any new legislation regarding this is practical, effective and enforceable.

2017 [5] Protection of Rights of Way post-Brexit

This General Council calls upon the board of trustees to make every effort to ensure that any new agricultural payments system resulting from Brexit contains an effective mechanism to ensure that anyone in receipt of public funds meets their legal obligations with regard to public rights of way and other public access. Ramblers should work closely with other environmental groups, as well as landowners and local authorities, to ensure that government subsidies for agriculture encourage improvements to public access and other environmental benefits.

2016 [8] Rights of Way Network

This General Council believes that not enough action has been taken to implement the motion carried overwhelmingly in 2011, which called upon the board of trustees to ensure that Ramblers has sufficient expert staff deployed to fully protect the rights of way network. The 2011 situation still prevails, so council again calls upon the board to ensure that there is an adequate number of expert staff working on rights of way to reflect the high priority attached to this work by Ramblers. It is vital that resources are made available for staff recruitment, training and development in this core policy area.

2014 [3] * Waymarking

This General Council calls upon the board of trustees to campaign for a substantially higher standard of waymarking with the purpose of ensuring that all rights of way are accurately, adequately and appropriately waymarked on a countrywide standardisation following Natural England guidelines, thus enabling them to be followed with ease by members of the public. Council further calls on the Board to urge all highway authorities in England and Wales to show much greater willingness to authorise Ramblers volunteers to undertake waymarking on their behalf and to enter into negotiations with the Institute of Rights of Way Officers (IPROW), local authorities and other relevant organisations with a view to facilitating it.

OTHER MOTIONS

2018 [3] Donate-a-Gate Schemes

This General Council requests the Board of Trustees to:

- encourage Areas/Groups to set up 'Donate-a-Gate' schemes;
- as far as practicable, provide support and resources necessary to set up and operate such schemes;
- publicise this good work in helping to maintain the walking environment, with the aim of attracting new members.

2017 [6] Funding for restoring Lost Ways

This General Council commends the work started in restoring lost ways in England and Wales, but is deeply concerned that resources allocated will be inadequate to ensure that members have the support needed to research and make all feasible claims. Council calls upon the board of trustees urgently to employ a project manager to develop the project in the light of the Don't Lose Your Way seminar in Birmingham in October 2016, answering the questions raised and drawing on internal and external expertise. This will include consideration of funding, for instance the establishment of a specific and significant fund from which areas can bid to fund relevant work, particularly training volunteers, copying the records needed to evidence claims and a 'fighting fund' to respond to challenges to claims.

2016 [9] * Enhancement of Ramblers policy on rail crossings and Rights of Way

This General Council recognises and welcomes the current policy regarding the permanent closure of rail crossings. However, it considers that it fails to address the issue of the ongoing 'temporary' closure of crossings by Network Rail, either with the compliance of Highway Authorities by means of a Traffic Regulation Order, or unilaterally using the Health and Safety at Work Act of 1974. Council notes that these closures generally arise from 'convenient' revised risk assessments done by Network Rail, and requires that the board of trustees engages with Network Rail as a matter of extreme urgency in a review of this process and, in the meantime, immediately takes all measures possible to contest unjustified temporary closures not following recognised legal processes.

2014 [7] Access points to access land

This General Council is concerned about the continuing low level of usage of access land. The main reason why many walkers are reluctant to use access land is because they do not know where the access points are located; this is both to gain access to access land and within access land. Some local authorities have attempted to provide publicity about access points but this is frequently of poor quality. In many other places the publicity about access points is non-existent. Therefore the publicity on how to use access land needs to be improved, with ideally the access points being shown on OS 1:25,000 maps. General Council recommends that the board of trustees campaigns on this issue.

Council is aware that the preceding paragraph is already Ramblers' policy, following its approval as a motion in 2011 and notes the reports by the board issued in 2012 and 2013. However, council does not consider action on the 2011 motion can be considered complete and requires the board to continue campaigning and reporting progress on this issue.