

Scottish Council 2020 Minute

**Scottish Council 2020 Minute
RAMBLERS SCOTLAND SCOTTISH COUNCIL 2020
MINUTE OF THE THIRTY THIRD ANNUAL MEETING
Held on Saturday 7 - Sunday 8 March 2020
at the Marine Hotel, North Berwick**

Saturday 7 March

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Convenor Ronnie Forbes welcomed everyone and laid out some expectations regarding Scottish Council. He hoped that members would be informed and inspired by the weekend, and noted the importance of individuals contributing, including through informal conversations. Ronnie asked Board of Trustee members to stand and identify themselves as well as SCEC members and individuals from Ramblers GB staff.
- 1.2 There were 108 members attending, slightly fewer than last year's 127. Representatives came from all Areas and 63% of Groups were represented.
- 1.3 Ronnie noted the change at director level for RS and introduced Brendan Paddy.

2 RAMBLERS SCOTLAND – OUR YEAR

- 2.1 Brendan spoke about the RS 2019/2020 Year. He talked about the types of walks that he loves but also the importance of offering walks non-members want if we are going to grow our membership. In this context, he talked about the Introductory Walks pilot.
- 2.2 Brendan noted that research commissioned by Ramblers Scotland from University of Edinburgh in relation to the barriers to walking outdoors, noted that individuals who were not regular walkers wanted slightly shorter / easier walks than Groups normally organised and also more local walks. Information from this research has informed the Introductory Walks pilot.
- 2.3 Twelve Groups will be involved in this Introductory Walks project. A guidance booklet has been compiled to assist the Groups involved, which stresses that an Introductory Walk should be an additional walk specifically for non-members and outside the normal walks programme. It was also important that all walk leaders involved in the Introductory Walks had undergone Walk Leadership training. This would help ensure that there would be a warm welcome for newcomers and also provide assurance of the quality and safety consideration of the walks. Brendan also stressed the importance of using the Ramblers App for the registration of those participating in the Introductory Walks. This information would draw through into other Ramblers' systems so that, with the individual's permission, new walkers could be contacted and hopefully their initial interest could be converted into membership of RS.

- 2.4 An external digital agency has been commissioned to market the walks and it is hoped that they will attract at least 15 prospective members on each walk.

3 ANNUAL REPORT

- 3.1 Brendan highlighted aspects of the Annual Report. These included the Mapping Scotland'sPaths project which will greatly improve the digital mapping of paths across Scotland, helping more people to access the outdoors. Brendan noted that Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood Award was won by Falkirk. Other projects included the Scottish Walk Leadership training project, the Out There Award for 18 – 26 year olds and also the great success of the President's Walks undertaken by the outgoing President, Ben Dolphin. Brendan also took the opportunity to note that Lucy Wallace was our new President, although unable to attend Scottish Council. Lucy is the first woman President in RS's history.
- 3.2 In relation to RS campaign work, Coul Links was noted as a particular success. RS worked alongside seven other conservation and access charities, in the campaign to stop a golf course being built at an internationally protected wetland site in Sutherland.
- 3.3 In relation to the strategic objective of 'Becoming a Great Charity', Brendan noted the importance of digital systems to the way that Ramblers' staff engage with volunteers and how volunteers engage with members of their Groups. Brendan noted the new website Assemble, which will mean that all information about volunteers will be up to date and synchronised with other Ramblers' systems. Brendan also noted that membership in Scotland is growing and emphasised that everyone contributes to this growth.

4 QUESTIONS AND ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT (Paper 02)

- 4.1 A number of questions were asked including the fact that there are many more women members of RS than men and that some men view walking as a female activity. There was also a comment about BAME representation. Brendan emphasised the importance of inclusivity.
- 4.2 The acceptance of the Annual Report was proposed by Trevor Jones (Lochaber and Lorn Group) and seconded by Brian Macgillivray (Dundee Group) and was therefore formally adopted.

5 EVERYONE IS WELCOME...COME ON IN!

Presented by Sarah Marfleet, director of membership and fundraising

- 5.1 Ronnie introduced Sarah Marfleet, director of membership and fundraising. Sarah noted that she had set up a new team to return membership to sustainable growth. She also noted the importance of what makes the Ramblers special and unique and the importance of looking at the collective impact of the organisation. She emphasised the importance of digital marketing and technology was one of the tools to be increasingly used to engage with members and the public. The importance of the selection of language in our communications was stressed, as well as the necessity for our campaigns to be visible, relevant, welcoming and inclusive. Sarah also noted that Scotland, in particular, was leading on the following: President's Walks, Young Adult Development and Introductory Walks.

5.2 In relation to the President's Walks, after the close of Sarah's talk, Ronnie took the opportunity again to note RS's new president was Lucy Wallace, who was also looking forward to walking with as many Groups as possible.

6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS TO SCOTTISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MOTIONS COMMITTEE (Paper 03)

6.1 Convenor Ronnie Forbes noted that there are three honorary posts on SCEC: the convener, viceconvener and treasurer. There are seven ordinary members of SCEC and three members of the Motions Committee. If seven or fewer nominations for SCEC were received and three or fewer nominations for the Motions Committee were received, there would be no elections. The nomination forms for SCEC and the Motions Committee were included with the delegate packs for those who were entitled to vote (papers 09 and 10).

7 APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER, TELLERS AND SCRUTINEERS

7.1 Sheila Williamson, North Berwick Group, was noted as the Returning Officer and identified herself to Scottish Council. Nominations forms were to be handed into Sheila Williamson by 5.45pm this afternoon. Christine George and Eileen Turnbull, also North Berwick Group, were appointed as tellers and scrutineers. They identified themselves to Scottish Council and they will count the votes received if there is a competitive election.

8 FORMAL ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENTS AND HONORARY OFFICERS

8.1 There was one nomination for convener and one nomination for treasurer for SCEC. No nominations for the post of viceconvener had been received by the closing date.

9 SCOTTISH COUNCIL CHALLENGE

Presentations from the 2019 Scottish Council Challenge Awards

9.1 Magnificent Eleven

Presented by Catherine Watt, Glasgow Group

Catherine spoke about the assistance received from Gary Linstead, Countryside Ranger for Glasgow South East. Gary is passionate about the variety of woodland, parks and other green spaces in and around the Glasgow area but opportunities to explore them in a linked way were limited. The Magnificent Eleven is an 11-mile circular walk that explores some of Glasgow's green spaces including Linn park, King's Park, Cathkin Braes, Castlemilk and the village of Carmunnock.

9.2 Clachnaben Path

Presented by Alison Mitchell, Grampian Area

Alison noted that funding had been obtained from the National Lottery Community Fund for the upgrading of this pathway in Aberdeenshire, including for the removal of metal pins on steps put in many years ago on part of the path to the summit. The money from the Scottish Council Challenge would be used to fund their removal. Alison also stressed the importance of partnership working when working towards goals.

10 GROUP SUCCESSES

10.1 Growing membership

Presented by Bekah Cork, Glasgow Young Walkers

Bekah spoke about how the Glasgow Young Walkers group had almost folded due to the lack of individuals willing to put themselves forward as committee members. However, they have now dramatically increased membership from 59 to 116. Bekah emphasised the importance of scheduling a variety of walks including day walks / evening walks / night walks, as well as organising social events. They are also looking at introducing family walks. The demand for car owners, and the arrangements to bring people together in order to arrive at the start point of a walk, was also stressed as an important issue.

10.2 Promoting Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood

Presented by Wraight Shepherd, Stirling, Falkirk and District Group

Wraight spoke about the length of the pathways in and around Falkirk which has extend three-fold over the last 30 years. He mentioned that out of the 82 applicants to be considered for the accolade as Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood, this was reduced to a short list of 10 and from this shortlist, Falkirk was placed first. Voting was via the internet and was open to all, not just Ramblers' members.

10.3 Why we love the Ramblers App

Eric Pickering, Dumfries and District Group

Eric spoke about the Insight Hub and how information is drawn through from walks published in GWEM into the Hub. He stressed the importance of using the Ramblers app to register individuals participating in a walk, so that details can be recorded in the Insight Hub, helping groups keep track of which walks are most popular.

10.4 Being a Walk Leader Trainer

Lorna Dunster, Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Group

Lorna emphasised the significance of her journey as a walk leader, after a not too successful first walk as a walk leader, to sharing her experience on her journey to becoming a more experienced walk leader and finally a walk leader trainer. Lorna also noted the importance of building confidence for walk leaders and passing on the Ramblers message to others.

11 FORMAL BUSINESS

11.1 Apologies

The Convener read out the apologies received from Karine Davison, Bearsden and Milngavie Group and Liz Hunt, Motions Committee.

11.2 APPROVAL OF SCOTTISH COUNCIL 2019 MINUTE

There was one matter arising from the minute brought forward by Barry Pottle, convener of the Motions Committee. There was an inaccuracy in relation to Motions 1 and 2. Both these motions were submitted by Alistair Cant and not by the Scottish Council Executive Committee.

11.3 Scottish Council accepted this amendment and approved the minute (Paper 04). This was proposed by Catherine Watt, Glasgow Group and seconded by James Crockett, Inverclyde Group.

12 REPORT AND ACTION TAKEN ON 2019 MOTIONS (Paper 05a)

The report on actions on 2019 motions was presented.

13 STATEMENT AND ADOPTION OF SCOTTISH COUNCIL AND GATHERING ACCOUNTS (Papers 06 & 07)

- 13.1 Alistair Cant, honorary treasurer, provided details of the income and expenditure of the 2018–19 audited accounts (06). Alistair noted that there was a small surplus of £116.43 in relation to the costs of running SCEC.
- 13.2 The acceptance of the Scottish Council Accounts was proposed by Trevor Jones (Lochaber and Lorn Group) and seconded by Mike Morris (Blairgowrie and District Group) and the accounts were therefore formally adopted.
- 13.3 In relation to the Scottish Ramblers Gathering Accounts (07), Alistair noted that it was necessary to carry forward a considerable surplus in order to plan next year's Gathering and to pay advance items such as hotel deposits.
- 13.4 In relation to Ramblers Scotland finances summary report (08), Alistair noted that expenditure related to staff costs, project costs and Area/Group costs, as well as Scottish Council costs. Alistair also noted a very slight rise in income compared to expenditure. It was also noted that the Ramblers GB Accounts had still had to be audited.

14 THANKS AND QUESTIONS

- 14.1 Alistair thanked the staff at Ramblers GB for compiling the Ramblers Scotland finances summary report.
- 14.2 There were no questions regarding the accounts.

15 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

- 15.1 The appointment of Paul Kenny as the independent examiner for Scottish Council accounts was agreed. The appointment of David Fenlon as the independent examiner for the Scottish Ramblers Gathering accounts was agreed. Scottish Council accepted both appointments.

16 OUT THERE AWARD

Presented by Sam Knight, young adult development officer, Ramblers Scotland

Sam explained that this award was a pilot project working with young people aged between 18 and 26 years. The research that RS had commissioned from Edinburgh University had shown that one of the main barriers to walking outdoors was not knowing where to go or who to go with.

Funding had been obtained from Active Scotland and the People's Postcode Lottery to devise the award which would run over three non-consecutive days. One of the Key Performance Indicators for the award was to attract at least 50% participation from women. This had been far exceeded. To date, there had also been a 97% completion rate and 37% participation from minority groups. Sam has worked with a wide variety of partners to deliver this award and he noted his thanks to those with whom he had worked. Sam also noted that on completion of the award, the individuals receive a year's membership of RS and they are also encouraged to walk with our Young Walkers groups and pursue Walk Leadership training. Sam then took questions.

17 DISCUSSION FORUMS EXPLORING TEN DIFFERENT TOPICS

17.1 Do Area structures service us, especially in rural areas and how do we replace them?

Facilitated by Ronnie Forbes, SCEC Convenor

Rural areas and rural area committees are struggling to function. Renfrewshire Cowal & Bute area is in abeyance. South West Scotland is in a year of transition from being in an area to becoming self-sustaining groups independently or within a new structure. Highlands and Island area's last AGM was only just quorate and the area is unable to fill all committee positions. Grampian area also continues to struggle as a fully functioning area.

The new digital and data infrastructure has loosened the historic organisational rigidity, in communications and finance, from central office to area, to groups. Assemble supports further lateral communication amongst volunteers and groups.

Groups in rural areas are generally stable or growing membership and the dissolution of areas is not a result of any breakdown in relations between groups.

It was agreed:

- To form a Rural Areas Working Group ("RAWG") with a SCEC lead, to recommend a new way (structure) of supporting rural groups and enable their further growth.
- The proposal should take account of the external political geography.
- The proposal should create a climate in which new groups are enabled to start-up.
- The proposal should not be imposed on areas, groups or members and should have the support of the Rural Discussion Group ("RDG") formed at Scottish Council 2020.

Timescale: Report to SCEC by August 2020.

17.2 Modernising Scottish Council, making it more relevant for the 21st century

Facilitated by Douglas Tullis, SCEC member

One of the strongest ideas to come out of the discussion forum was that it would be good to video record the key presentations and talks and post them up on Ramblers Scotland's website and social media feeds so that those not directly involved in Scottish Council can see what it's all about and perhaps be enthused about projects/ideas or want to attend future events.

The forum talked, inconclusively, about the "one member/one vote" idea. A problem is that, as with the AGMs of most organisations, there is uncertainty as to how many people are going to come which makes planning and costing very difficult when the annual "event" is much more than just a business AGM. One member/one vote would probably skew attendance and voting power in favour of groups local to the venue chosen.

A proportional representation system, in terms of which the number of delegates would be fixed and the places allocated pro-rata to group/area membership numbers might be possible, however it would skew attendance and voting power in favour of the bigger groups which are not necessarily the most active and some might struggle to fill their allocation of slots.

Many organisations have a purely business AGM and a separate annual conference but you then have the cost of two meetings, so the discussion came to no conclusion.

Different groups and areas seem to have widely differing procedures to select those who come to Scottish Council and there is a lack of clarity on whether/how delegates feed back to their respective areas or groups.

There is also a lack of awareness of what SCEC actually does - ie lots of excellent presentations from Ramblers staff members but where does SCEC fit in?

Would it be a good idea to have an overriding 'theme' for Scottish Council? It could be things like the environment, walking programmes, access rights, growing our membership, etc.

17.3 Attracting and retaining members – sharing best practice, success stories and ideas

Facilitated by Sarah Marfleet, director of membership and fundraising (Ramblers GB)

Lots of ideas emerged from the discussion forum including:

Welcoming new members

We all want every new member of the Ramblers to feel welcomed and valued when they join their local group walks. A recognition that meeting a new group can be daunting, so making sure members feel comfortable by ensuring they have all the information they need ahead of their first walk is important. Whether that's an email, phone call, a welcoming Facebook post, WhatsApp, meetup, or face-to-face – the first contact is crucial. Some of the delegates found our **top tips and email template for new members** useful. Taster walks have proven popular for some and uploading inspiring photos of walks onto Facebook to show new walkers what they'll experience when they turn up (a friendly, normal group!)

Ensuring a new members' first walk with us isn't their last?

New features have been added to the membership secretary dashboard. If groups use the Ramblers walk register, they can now see details of any non-member walkers who have joined our led walks (and given their consent to be contacted by the Ramblers) so that they can give them a warm welcome and encourage them to join the Ramblers as a member. Delegates were reminded they can download this **handy guide** which provides advice on how to give the best welcome to walkers who are trying out their group, including a template email and best practice tips from Ramblers groups.

Many local members don't walk with us

We know members join for different reasons – led walks, independent walking (promote the Ramblers app and routes) or to campaign for the Ramblers. Delegates wanted to know how to engage and retain members who they don't see on their local walks and it was identified there is a role for the staff team to play, to engage these members through central communications, social media etc and help them feel part of our GB-wide community. Not everyone joins to walk with us. The Ramblers app can help promote led walks 'near me' whether that's in their own local group or an adjoining group.

17.4 How do we build a progressive onward journey for members who have outgrown their 20s to 30s group?

Facilitated by Sam Knight, young adult development officer

It was identified that an easy win is to have groups more interlinked and the technology in place to enable this to happen. For example, members of Edinburgh Young Walkers wouldn't necessarily know about Edinburgh Ramblers activities or Edinburgh Family Walkers or Lothian and Borders path maintenance team or other young groups etc.

Ideally when someone searches on the Ramblers website, they should be able to click onto young adult walkers in Scotland and see everything that's on offer across the whole of Scotland, including events, socials, weekends away etc. All of this should be on one standardised platform that all groups are using, as opposed to what's happening currently with individual sites hidden deep in the search engine. It was felt that this one change alone could potentially increase engagement and potential membership and would make us look more professional.

Delegates thought that each young group should create the option to run family walks within their programme, primarily to keep those people who now have families engaged with the group during their next stage of life.

They were also keen to see Ramblers Scotland move away from such defined age brackets. Use a more general name for groups such as young adult walking groups, rather than defining age category of 20s – 30s. Anybody welcome who is young at heart. Older members are valued because they can potentially share valuable experience with possibly less experienced younger members.

The forum explored the idea of having fewer small groups, in effect creating one much larger overarching group with subsections – perhaps even an area wide group, merging EYW, Edinburgh Ramblers, Midlothian Ramblers, Balerno etc. This could mean it's all interlinked and pulling in the same direction, although sub activities might be different. This model could be explored more fully.

17.5 What should Ramblers Scotland's vision be for landscapes and nature in Scotland?

Facilitated by Brendan Paddy, director

There was general support for rewilding where it focuses on the regeneration of landscapes including forests. However there were mixed views and concerns about the reintroduction of species that have become extinct, especially wolves, although members were warmer to lynx which reflects our current position.

One view expressed was that if we remove grazing pressure, paths may need more maintenance. Another that 'reforestation' may start with an 'untidy' phase of weeds, then scrub, before we get to forest.

There was also general support for our position on deer, including culling. Members had no problem with forestry per se so long as it's 'the right trees, in the right place'. There was quite strong interest in coastal and river erosion in the context of climate change - impact on landscape but also lots of paths? There is perhaps a role for the Ramblers in enhancing natural barriers, eg tree planting and dune restoration.

National Parks in Scotland are seen by members as offering very weak environmental protection. Do designed protected landscapes such as National Scenic Areas and SSSIs (sites of specific scientific interest), have any meaning if they can be developed? Members felt we should lobby for strong protection.

There was concern about dualling the A9 and the benefits to walkers and local communities and also concern about the impact on climate change and landscape if people are driving more.

Members do feel we have a responsibility to protect the landscape as part of responsible access rights. They also liked the ideal of volunteer action eg litter picks, maintaining paths and planting trees.

17.6 What would members like to see more (and less) of within their communications from Ramblers Scotland

Facilitated by Danny Carden, communications & engagement manager

This forum was attended by three young walkers' volunteers. There was a lot of support for the Scottish monthly e-newsletter which they feel is a valuable member benefit and they are keen we work harder to encourage more opt-ins for it.

They feel our social media channels work well, especially with the increasing numbers of videos we are producing and our efforts to reach out to speak with other online forums and influential accounts, however they felt we "must do Insta!".

They also thought that the relevance of content is good across all our channels, with a nice mix of Scotland and GB.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Reducing the volume of emails, all three members at the table had received six corporate emails in two weeks.
- Improve timing of email, evenings are better than daytime.
- Stop sending giant zip file member lists to volunteers every week. Remember young people often don't have a computer – and surely there is a more secure solution.
- Refine opt-ins:
 - self-service to allow members to opt in and out of particular topic
 - more clarity on what you're opting into.

17.7 What can Ramblers' members do to improve their local path network

Facilitated by Helen Todd, campaigns and policy manager

The forum started by identifying elements of what makes a good path, such as:

- Appropriate surface and width
- Signed and waymarked
- Well maintained (not overly boggy, slippery, rocky, steps/gates/stiles in good condition)
- Local information and interpretation boards, mapping
- Useful route / functional
- Seats / pleasant views and surroundings
- Vegetation cut back
- No litter
- Lots of wildlife and nature
- Appropriate accessibility (least restrictive option infrastructure)
- Promoted (council website, local visitor centre leaflets, etc)

They then reflected on how well that fitted with participants' own path networks – generally they were felt to be good but with some gaps.

We shared the kind of activities group members were already doing, eg, Magnificent Eleven, Inverurie Ramblers work on the Gordon Way and discussed what could be done, such as regular path maintenance days or just litter picking, cutting back vegetation with secateurs. While there is some good activity, it isn't widespread. Delegates discussed how groups or individual members could approach councils or ranger services to get involved in existing path warden schemes, or join existing "Friends of" groups to help out or fundraise for signposts, etc.

Recommendations for future activity

- Ramblers groups/individual members and volunteers should find out what is already happening locally (contact access officer, ranger service, local path groups or Friends of groups). If there is already activity going on then, it helps with coordination of work and potentially provides insurance, plus they can liaise with landowners.
- Ramblers groups / individual members should consider taking on a section of local paths, for example by reporting on its state to the local authority access officer, carrying out low level maintenance or litter picking, etc. This could be agreed as taking place on a regular basis – once a year, three times year and so on.
- Information on Ramblers guidance documents for volunteers and insurance should be more easily available. For example, in Scotland there are guidance documents on bridges, signposting and waymarking, roles for group/area access officers, etc, along with the GB insurance which covers path maintenance work.

17.8 Hunting down the past – creating an oral or digital record of Ramblers Scotland's first 35 years

Facilitated by Alison Mitchell, SCEC member

There were five in this forum and four of the five volunteered to be part of an interest group going forward.

Initially it was agreed that the historical archive would be for:

- Historical research purposes with items available online held in digital and/or oral format.
- Material would be gathered in stages, and on request from areas, groups and individuals and an inventory established.
- Categories could be:
 - Gathering memories
 - SCEC
 - Scottish Council and National (General) Council Meetings
 - Newspaper articles (Scotland wide rather than local, at least in the early stages)
 - Celebratory walks
 - Campaigns and rallies.

Funding would be sought for the purchase of appropriate software to enable digital and oral recordings to be made.

17.9 Help with Assemble, the new volunteer website

Surgery led by Wendy Halley, assembler project manager (Ramblers GB)

This was more an information sharing workshop, rather than a discussion forum, that enabled delegates to better understand Assemble - our new volunteer website. The main points discussed were:

- We're in the first phase of Assemble: getting the data correct. We need to know who is volunteering for the Ramblers as the organisation has a legal responsibility. In Assemble, staff and volunteers view the same data about volunteers' roles, rather than clunky and out of date reports being sent. The data is frequently wrong at the moment but easily corrected if groups or volunteers let us know.
- Once all volunteers across the Ramblers have been told about Assemble, more functionality will be released and volunteers will begin to see the benefits. This is likely to be the end of April.
- Not everyone likes to use a websites/apps but many people do. Assemble lets volunteers get information that way if they want to. However, volunteers can still email or phone as normal if they prefer.

17.10 Digital and data, getting to grips with the app and dashboards

Surgery led by Richard May, board member (Ramblers GB)

An information sharing workshop.

17.11 Details of these discussions are noted in the Scottish Council 2020 Report by Jeannie Cranfield, delivery officer, Ramblers Scotland.

18 DICK BALHARRY MEMORIAL TALK

Presented by Quintin Lake, architectural and landscape photographer

In 2015, Quintin embarked on a five-year project to walk around the British coastline in sections. His project is entitled 'The Perimeter'. He has almost completed his journey and he shared some outstanding images of scenes around the British coastline at different times of the day. He also shared images of the weather conditions endured whilst camping during his walks and signage stating that land was private / access prohibited. All necessary equipment for sleeping and cooking, including dehydrated food, were carried as part of his journey.

Sunday 8 March

19 WELCOME: DAY TWO

Ronnie welcomed everyone to day two of Scottish Council. He noted that it was International Woman's Day and that it was appropriate to mention this as RS now has its first woman president. Ronnie also thanked Danny Carden and Douglas Tullis for leading walks on Saturday evening and Sunday morning respectively.

20 FINAL MOTIONS ORDER PAPER

(Paper 11b)

- 20.1 Two motions that had been submitted, accepted and published in the first version of the order paper were subsequently withdrawn and so there were no motions this year.
- 20.2 Barry Pottle, convener of the Motions Committee, spoke about the role of the Motions Committee in relation to making sure that motions are competent and deciding the order of the motions if there is more than one. He stressed that this process is not about personal opinions but investigating whether the motions are technically competent.
- 20.3 Barry also took the opportunity to emphasise the following in relation to a motion:
- a motion will result in a vote
 - a motion could result in SCEC taking specific action
 - a motion could be of such significance that it could have considerable wider publicity
- 20.4 Barry also asked conference to think carefully in relation to issues which could be covered within discussion topics at Scottish Council and which could possibly lead to motions submitted to the following year's Scottish Council.
- 20.5 The acceptance of the Final Motions Order Paper was proposed by Jean Macgillivray, Dundee and District Group and seconded by Ben Dolphin (vice president) and was therefore formally adopted.

21 CAMPAIGNS AND POLICY UPDATE

Presentation by Helen Todd, campaigns and policy manager, Ramblers Scotland

Helen opened her talk by noting that the Ramblers' charitable objectives include encouraging people to walk in the outdoors through the provision and protection of foot paths. She also noted the importance of helping members and groups, providing advice and working with other organisations / forums / stakeholder groups which included Government agencies, landowners and landscape managers.

Helen mentioned campaigning activity which included: Coul Links and the proposed golf course in Aberdeenshire, byelaws in relation to camping in the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, the amendment to the Scottish Government's planning bill in relation to hilltracks, working with Scottish Environment LINK group in relation to the management of the deer population to achieve a good ecological balance, ensuring the landscape is still protected after the UK leaves the EU and the Mapping Scotland's Paths project. Helen also noted that if individual members wish to add their voice to any campaigns that there are toolkits on the website, and these will also be available in the future on the volunteers' website Assemble.

22 MAPPING SCOTLAND'S PATHS

Presentation by Luke Phillips, mapping Scotland's paths manager

Luke spoke about the proof of concept area, which focused on the West of Scotland, including a mix of urban and rural areas and areas with health inequalities. The area encompasses several local authorities, a regional park and a national park. Once the approach has proven to be valid, it can be rolled out across Scotland. It is hoped that

there will be a public ‘soft launch’ of the project this summer. Luke spoke about the importance of the definition of what constitutes a path and that partners in the Mapping Scotland’s Paths project have contributed towards the definition. Luke also stressed that volunteers will be involved in this project in relation to recording data / confirming the accuracy of existing data but the project had not yet reached this stage. There are currently 60 -70,000 km of paths across Scotland, which is a substantial base to build upon. The information amassed by this project will be available and accessible to everyone.

23 FORMAL ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENTS AND HONORARY OFFICERS

- 23.1 There was one nomination for convener and one nomination for treasurer. No nominations for the post of vice convener had been received by the closing date.

Position	Nomination	Proposer	Seconder
president	Lucy Wallace	Elly Macdonald	Alison Mitchell
vice president	Dennis Canavan	Alison Mitchell	Elly Macdonald
vice president	Ben Dolphin	Alison Mitchell	Elly Macdonald
vice president	John Foster	Alison Mitchell	Elly Macdonald
vice president	John Holms	Alison Mitchell	Elly Macdonald
vice president	Cameron McNeish	Alison Mitchell	Elly Macdonald
vice president	Andrew Murray	Alison Mitchell	Elly Macdonald
convener	Alison Mitchell	David Fenlon	Jane Catto
treasurer	Alistair Cant	John Holms	Alison Mitchell

24 IN CONVERSATION WITH...

Presentation by Ian Findlay, chief officer, Paths for All, in conversation with Brendan Paddy, director, Ramblers Scotland

Brendan introduced Ian Findlay who opened his presentation by relating how his childhood experiences had led to his pursuit of a career with environmental charities. He noted the importance of everyone in Scotland meeting the minimum physical activity guidelines and he promoted walking as a main means of achieving this goal. He noted the importance of active travel: people walking or cycling each day in relation to work or other daily activities. He stressed the importance of mental health, social health, as well as physical health.

Ian also noted the importance of eco-psychology, the importance of our contact with nature. In relation to one of the questions put forward at the end of his presentation, he noted that it is important to allow workers to get out at lunchtime and go for a walk. Brendan mentioned the progression to more challenging walks leading on from health walks / buggy walks / family walks and the possibility of Paths for All working

with RS in this regard. Brendan also mentioned the possibility of inter-generational walks and Ian mentioned the importance of maintaining physical activity levels as individuals get older. Both agreed that walking gets a lesser share of the Government budget when compared to cycling and this was an argument for increasing the overall budget physical activity promotion & active travel to improve walking provision.

25 WALK LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Presentation by John Nicholls, learning manager, Ramblers GB

John noted the 3,500 walks per year undertaken by Walk Leaders. Walk Leadership is the most common volunteer role in Scotland. John noted one of the concerns in relation to an aging profile of members. However, John noted that the average age of Walk Leaders engaging in training is coming down. On average, individuals continue to engage as a Walk Leader for eight years. John spoke about the development of a learning pathway. There are now seven volunteer trainers and sixty volunteer mentors. John noted that the first residential weekend had been held specifically for young walkers. John also noted the importance of the 'sounding board', where individuals have brought a critical approach to the content of the training.

Ronnie thanked John for his work to date and offered his good wishes in relation to his new temporary training manager role with Ramblers GB. Ronnie also welcomed Ruth Bowen, who has taken on John's role with Ramblers Scotland, on a temporary basis.

26 RAMBLERS VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Presentation by Kate Ashbrook, chair, Board of Trustees, Ramblers GB

Kate mentioned that Ronnie is stepping down from SCEC and extended her thanks for the work that he had undertaken. Kate also noted that Ronnie will remain on the Board of Trustees for Ramblers GB to which he was directly elected by General Council. Kate also paid tribute to the outgoing president of RS, Ben Dolphin and also welcomed the new president, Lucy Wallace.

Kate welcomed Alison Mitchell as the new convener for SCEC. Kate also paid tribute to the former chief executive, Van Griffiths, and the work that she had undertaken bringing volunteers and staff together. Kate noted that there were various national awards available through Ramblers GB which recognised the achievements of volunteers.

Kate also mentioned that Ramblers GB had 'turned the corner' in relation to growing membership. She stated that it was important to share lessons learned with RGB during this weekend and thanked Scottish Council for inviting her to present this address.

27 THAT WARM FUZZY FEELING...MY THREE YEARS WITH RAMBLERS SCOTLAND

Presentation by Ben Dolphin, Ramblers Scotland's outgoing president

Ben stressed the importance of walking with Groups to help him find out more about RS. He noted that he had walked with individuals in their 20s to those in their 80s. He had made it his mission to walk with as many Groups as possible and had, indeed, walked with all 54 RS Groups. Ben also mentioned the importance of the 'doorstep discovery', about discovering wonderful walks close to your home. He also mentioned the importance of walk leaders and all the individuals behind the

organisation of successful walks. He mentioned the John O'Groats Trail and the importance of the assistance received from volunteers.

Ben wished Lucy, the new president, every success and also gave his best wishes to RS. Ronnie presented a small token of thanks to Ben and stressed that he will be remaining with RS as vice president.

28 COMPETITION RESULTS

Results of the competitions were announced by Danny Carden, communications and engagement officer, Ramblers Scotland.

29 ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCOTTISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MOTIONS COMMITTEE

29.1 There was no election necessary for SCEC. Seven nominations had been received for the seven places available: Bekah Cork, Beth Dickson, Mike Morris, Elly Macdonald, Douglas Tullis, David Webb and Jay Wilson were confirmed.

29.2 There was no election necessary for the motions committee as three nominations had been received for the three places available. Those standing were: Barry Pottle, James Bennett and Liz Hunt.

30 CLOSING REMARKS

30.1 Alison Mitchell, the new convener, remarked that the first Scottish Council was held in 1985. She noted the 1990 RS Annual Report, possibly written by Dave Morris, a previous Director, and read out some of the details from this report.

30.2 Ronnie thanked everyone for attending Scottish Council and the volunteers for organising the weekend, including the volunteers from the North Berwick Group. He also thanked Jeannie Cranfield in particular. Ronnie also reminded delegates to complete the evaluation form and that there was an expenses form enclosed in their pack for completion.

30.3 Alison thanked Ronnie for his year as convener of SCEC. Alison noted that the current SCEC consisted of five women and five men and over half of the committee were under 50 years. She mentioned that Ronnie, Trevor Jones, Andy Malby and Linda Moyes were leaving the committee.

30.4 Alison also noted the importance of not only holding regular SCEC meetings but also the setting up of working groups, including groups focusing on the constitution and also in relation to support for rural areas.

End of minute

Hildegard Berwick, governance and events administrator, 09 April 2020

<p>This Minute of Scottish Council 2020 was formally approved at Scottish Council 2021 on 6 March</p>
