

**Minutes of Executive Committee of Northumbria Area Ramblers
held at St Nicholas Church Hall, South Gosforth, Newcastle
on Monday 20 January 2020 at 7 pm**

Present:

Mike Webber, Area Chair	Malcolm McVey, Area Membership Officer
Steve Edwards, Ponteland and Area Treasurer	Bill Gallon, (Independent member/Heritage Way)
Wendy Maxted, Area Secretary	Nuala Wright, Area Access Officer
Pauline Hawdon (Minutes Secretary)	Rob Hutchinson (Sunderland Walking Club)
Richard Fletcher (Area Vice Chair and Durham)	Tony Royston (Chair, Derwentside)
Alison Emslie, Independent member	

Action

1 Apologies for absence: Neil Allender, Moira Pearson, David Crowe, Alexa Rainsford and Irene Carmichael.

2 Minutes of the previous Executive Meeting were approved.

3 Matters arising:

- 3.1 With regard to getting an understanding of the purpose of the Executive Committee, Groups would prefer a visit on a walk rather than at an AGM.
- 3.2 Bill Gallon had agreed to store the display boards.
- 3.3 The Annual Report & Accounts were now on the website. The Agenda for the AGM would be emailed or sent out imminently and Groups would be advised to read the Report from the website before the AGM..

4 Heritage Way (Bill Gallon)

Bill had met with Judith Taylor and Steve Germain to see how the system was working following David Dallow's resignation; there were some problems and some groups had not responded. A new form was to be used to report problems on the Heritage Way and was available for download on the Area website..

5 Priorities for 2020

5.1 Revised Format for Area Report – The normal format was to be used for this year. Extracts would be selected from the Area Report to be used for a publicity leaflet.

5.2 Lost Ways (Email from Neil Allender)

"North of the Tyne" groups currently working on Lost Ways were:

- Hexham – had 6 people doing research and had initially identified 2 routes in the Allendale area. They would be meeting in the near future to progress matters.
- Tyneside – were organising a meeting in February to identify routes and discuss how to proceed. At least 4 members were expected to attend.

Central Office were working on a new platform which members of the public would be able to use. Present co-ordinators were Neil Allender, Barbara Herrington, John Emsie and Ivy Papps. Malcolm McVey had some 1952 Pathfinder maps in the Area library.

Richard Fletcher commented that some Ways were being disturbed by motor bikes making them impassable for walkers. He had received no response to his report about the 18" of mud on the Waterhouses path through the woods. The Loftus and Hull route had completely disappeared and the Tilberthwaite road in the Lake District had been damaged.

5.3 Walking Festival – Mike had attended an Area Leadership meeting, which suggested starting with advertising a "taster" walk for the public then encouraging them to go on a longer walk. If any Groups were interested he could discuss this with them.

6 Coastal Path Update (Nuala Wright)

The Amble to Scottish Border, to be published on 15 January, had now been released. An Article had appeared in "The Guardian". Natural England had some concern on the Budle Bay section where restrictions would be in place at certain times of the year for wildlife protection. Holy Island would be included in the Coastal Path. If there were objections, appeals must be held by March for the Secretary of State to make a decision.

7 Finance (Steve Edwards)

Current balance - £2,569.71. All invoices received had been paid; the invoice for latest "Walks" booklet was awaited. The budget request for £4,500 for 2019-20 had been approved. The year-end returns process was completed slightly late because of the slow response from one group – he still awaited their signed accounts. The process was due to be completed by the end of January. The next payment from Central Office was due at the end of January.

Regarding "dodgy" emails, people were advised NOT to open the email but to hover the mouse over the name, which would give details of the sender then deleting it immediately if not genuine.

8 Annual General Meeting

There were two speakers. Mike awaited details of the talk from Ronnie Forbes' (Trustee); the other presentation was from Iain Robson on Areas of Natural Beauty. If an additional staff member had been appointed for the North, then he/she should be invited to the AGM.

Mike to invite.

The following Area Officers were willing to be re-elected:

Vice Chair - Richard Fletcher,

Area Secretary - Wendy Maxted,

Treasurer - Steve Edwards,

Area Chair – Mike Webber said he would not be standing as Area Chair

Countryside Officer – Vacant. Useful to check on Planning Applications. R Fletcher said he received some notifications regarding Rights-of-Way in his area.

Independent Members – To check whether those not at the meeting were willing to re-stand.

Mike/Wendy to check & invite.

9 Officers Reports

Chair (Mike Webber)

Our bid to hold General Council in the North in 2021 had been successful and venues in Newcastle upon Tyne were being investigated. Although Mike was resigning as Chair, he agreed to continue to be Co-ordinator for the 2021 General Council Meeting.

Mike had been invited to a meeting at Sheffield by Carol Flint, Head of Brand, Central Office. They were setting up 4 groups of about 20 people throughout the country, of different audiences (non-ramblers, core ramblers, and various age groups) for research for increasing membership.. There was to be a 90-minute presentation at this year's meeting in Birmingham. A newsletter would be circulated beforehand.

Vice Chair (Richard Fletcher)

Richard had been interviewed by the BBC regarding the Pilgrimage Way between Escomb Church and Durham and the programme would be screened in April. Six new routes had been agreed, including one from Durham to Hartlepool. An article had also appeared in the Northern Echo.

Access (Nuala Wright)

- a) Access to the area around Chillingham Castle was now excluded.. It had been part of a Stewardship Scheme which had now ceased.
- b) A field bordering access land near Edmundbyers, had been sold to someone who wished to continue with access land but wanted to build a pool. Nuala thought we should object on principle and suggested Central Office should be involved..

10 Any Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Dates of future meetings –

- **Annual General Meeting** – Saturday 8 February, at Holy Trinity Parish Centre, Berwick upon Tweed
- **Area Council** – Monday 27 April at 7 pm at St Nicholas Church Hall, South Gosforth.