

**Minutes of Executive Committee of Northumbria Area Ramblers
held at Jesmond Methodist Church, St George's Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 2DL
on Monday 18 April 2016 at 7 pm**

Present:

Penny Ford (Area Chair & Alnwick)	Alison Emslie (Gateshead Group)
Stephen Edwards (Area Treasurer & Ponteland)	Nuala Wright (Access)
Pauline Hawdon (Mins. – Ncle CHA/HF)	Judith Taylor (Area Training)
Neil Allender (R of W Co-ordinator & Tyneside)	Malcolm McVey (Area & Tyneside – Membership)

Action

Penny welcomed Alison Emslie to the meeting, and congratulated Gateshead on the excellent venue for the AGM.

1 **Apologies for absence:** Richard Fletcher, Robert Hutchinson, and Bill Gallon.

2 **Minutes of the previous Executive Meeting** were approved.

3 **Matters arising:**

3.1 North & South Group Chairmen and Secretaries meetings. The North Group had been held and was well received.

3.2 Publicity Leaflet –. Richard Fletcher was to do a draft but has been very busy. Penny had ordered 50 posters from the website and local group information could be displayed alongside. Alison Emslie pointed out that posters could be customised using the National website and printed off. There was a need to publicise in a modern form

Items could be included in “Northumberland life” via Northumberland County Council website “home events”; “Street Life” via Gateshead Council, and other internet sites such as “Meet up”.

3.3 Website - Alison had been asked to look at the pros & cons of either revamping our Area website or using Central Office's Website. The National website was regularly upgraded, was now more user-friendly and she could see no reason to spend time and money revamping the Area website. She was willing to transfer information to the national website to see how it worked and a decision could be made as to whether to continue with the local one. She would bring her laptop to the Area Meeting on 25 April and would be willing to help group web-authors when required.

Alison

Items available on the national website:-

- Area page could include (a) Officers, (b) Maps for loan, (c) Training events linked to all Northumbria groups; advertisements which were included in the Northumbria Area walks booklet.
- Local group page, including officers and contacts.
- Possibly a pay-pal option to book coach places.
- Events calendar – where walks could be included, with routes and comments.
- Each group could have more than one web-author; anyone could contribute or make amendments with the web-editors approval.
- Web co-ordinators page.
- Extracts could be printed from the web-pages.

New people were generally attracted by the Walks database. Gateshead group attendance had tripled since including their details on the National website.

There was to be a national website training open day, but Alison would be happy to assist nominated group persons to help them create a group page. It was not possible to incorporate a link from the National website to a local group's own website. Gateshead group had created a Facebook link.

Alison

About 300 Northumbria Area programmes were printed but most groups had web-authors.

4 Executive Committee vacancies:

4.1 Area Secretary:

4.2 Countryside Officer: Central Office had no job description as they all needed updating.

4.3 Publicity & Media: Dave Turnbull had resigned due to health problems. Rachel Orange was willing to work on specific tasks but did not want to be Publicity & Media Officer.

5 Finance – Stephen Edwards

Present balance was £4,925.64p. A cheque for £101 was to clear. Invoices had been sent to advertisers and only Rowell's was outstanding. We are due £810 from Central Office from April.

Advertising in the Northumbria Area programme was £40 per half page and £60 per full page. Judith would contact Wildtrak to see if they would be interested in advertising and Penny Cotswold. All adverts were included on the website.

6 General Council

Penny Ford, Rachel Orange and Richard Fletcher had attended the meeting at York which was much improved from last year. Governance had been voted against, and Benedict Southwood had resigned. The Governance review had cost £46,000 so far and some groups had asked what was wrong that it needed amending. She then summarised some of motions and responses. There were 78 paid staff at Central Office.

Members Event day, which preceded GC had been successful with a choice of workshops, discussion with the head of the N Yorks National Park and 'Meet the Experts' panel. Rachel Orange had received a Volunteers award for her work with the Big Pathwatch. This event will be repeated, but separately from GC.

General Council 2017 will to be held in Southampton.

7 Volunteer Development Days & Walking Festival -

Half or full day Volunteer Development courses were to be held on 16 September at Durham University. 2016 Walking Festival was to be 3-11 September and groups would be asked to include all their walks on the website under the National Festival Walk section. Alison would help anyone with this.

Alison

8 Reports:

8.1 Training (Judith Taylor) – Training courses were up and running. Groups were asked to contact Judith when they had 2-8 interested people with some dates and payment could be made through the internet. It would be mentioned to the groups at the Area Meeting.

8.2 Access (Nuala Wright) –Coastal access from South Bents to Amble was now open; Morpeth group had walked the Northumberland section and Nuala was meeting to pull it together.

Nuala

8.3 Rights of Way (Neil Allender)

Heritage Way (started in 1985) (Judith Taylor) – Tyneside, Gateshead and Ponteland Groups had walked the whole of part 1 of the route and were meeting soon to hand the description to someone to walk it from the instructions. They may require money from the Committee for graphics etc.

Lost Rights of Ways – 4-5 people were making very slow progress at Woodburn Colliery Records Office and needed more helpers as there was only 10 years to have routes incorporated on the Definitive Map

Open-Cast mining at Druridge Bay - Mitchell Banks Mining had reduced the scale of mining and because they had agreed to develop the footpath and incorporate some permissive pathways, we were not objecting. It will be 7 years before the area is reinstated.

North & South Groups Footpaths meetings – Neil would like to know of any problems or any positive feedback and would try to organise meetings in Autumn when he had more experience. Penny would ask at the Area Meeting what groups would be interested in footpath improvement work.

Penny

8.4 Map Library (M McVey) – 342 had been listed on the Area website and were available for loan. Malcolm would post them out (£1.20 postage). It was possible that some of the older maps may be useful for the Lost Ways project.

9 Any Other Business

Penny mentioned that Gateshead group had had a "Ramblers Bake-Off " which raised £71.

There being no other business, meeting finished at 9 pm.

Next Meetings

Area Meeting – Monday 25 April 2016 at 7 pm in Jesmond Methodist Church Hall, St George's Terrace. Executive meeting – Monday 24 October 2016.