

**Minutes of Executive Committee of Northumbria Area Ramblers
held at 2 The Poplars, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne
on Monday 19 January 2015 at 7 pm**

Present:

Judith Taylor (Chair)	Penny Ford (Alnwick)	Malcolm McVey (Area & Tyneside – M'bership)
Neil Allender (Tyneside – Area Sec)	Bill Gallon (Pennine Way Assoc., G'hd)	Mark J Nugent (Independent)
Jon Davison (Chester-le-St)	Pauline Hawdon (Mins. – Ncle CHA/HF)	Tony Royston (Derwentside)
Richard Fletcher (Walks Sec. Durham)	Rob Hutchinson (S/land CHA/HF)	Dave Turnbull (Newcastle)

1 **Apologies for absence:** Alan Mitcham, Gill Atkinson, Gilbert Roberts, Rachel Orange, and Ian Tait.

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

3 **Matters arising:**

4. The Area's allocation should have been £3,400, not £10,250.

4 **Website Update**

Although we had been advised within other information, we had not realised that Central Office was altering their website, to include group information. Ian Tait had agreed to investigate what could be incorporated on the Central Office website, before deciding how to update our own. Ian intended to use a professional company to redesign our website, once it was decided what was required. It was hoped to have this information for the AGM, after which a date could be set to finalise our Area website.

5 **Financial Matters**

The current Independent Examiner of Accounts, Kathryn Howard, has resigned but Gill Atkinson had a possible substitute. Gill would like to have a meeting with Group Treasurers to discuss how she would like the accounts presented and is keen to split the role so that someone was responsible for helping, co-ordinating the groups, and submitting the results to her, so that she would be solely responsible for the Area Accounts. As Gill is a busy working woman, this would ease her load. It was suggested that if no-one was available, we could contact Newcastle Council for Voluntary Services, who offered financial services.

6 **Middleton Burn**

A windfarm was proposed, near St Cuthbert's Way and an application was expected soon. Alan Mitcham would like individual members to write and protest and will be setting this up in the near future.

7 **Executive Committee Vacancies**

7.1 Richard Fletcher had agreed to be Vice Chair.

7.2 Pat Jackson (Walk Northumbria) wished to resign; she has been struggling to get sufficient information for a quarterly production. It was agreed that information must get to members quickly. This could be included on our own website, emailed to Group Secretaries to pass to individuals, and/or sent directly to the 60% of members who had given email addresses.

7.3 Rachel Orange was unable to continue as Area Publicity Officer. It was hoped a new website might provide some publicity; Richard Fletcher had printed business cards which were proving useful, and hoped to have beer-mats printed.

7.4 Independent Examiner of Accounts – see 5.

7.5 Independent Members – As John Davison is Area Secretary, and Richard Fletcher, Vice Chair, this would leave 2 spaces for Independent representatives for Area Council. Mark Nugent would contact Mark Harrison to see if he would be interested.

8 **Training (Judith Taylor)**

It was hoped to hold courses in the Durham Area; 6 persons was the maximum preferred number of attendees in order to give individual attention. A charge of £10 for members, and £40 for non-members had been agreed; it was suggested that members could be refunded on attendance and the viability of doing this was discussed.

9 **Tyneside Group Constitution**

There were 2 variations to the model constitution: (a) ".... Co-opted members could not vote..." and (b) "The Group AGM must be held within 3 months of the calendar year."

Group AGM's were normally held before the Area AGM in January, so that any submissions could be made to General Council, which was normally around Easter. This had been pointed out to the Tyneside Group, but was probably a historic variation.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 General Council – Saturday & Sunday 28, & 29 March 2015, at Robinson College, Cambridge, the business meeting to begin at 1.30 pm, although there would be workshops beforehand. Forms were to be submitted by 14 February. 2 delegates from Northumbria Area will be paid for by Central Office, and 1 visitor paid from Area funds. It was agreed that Penny Ford and Jon Davison would attend. Richard Fletcher was interested in going as the visitor. It was suggested that Richard Holmes might run a workshop regarding Training Days – Judith Taylor to contact him first.
- 10.2 Development Day – one to be run in Darlington.
- 10.3 Governance documents – Dave Turnbull, Neil Allender and Judith Taylor have responded. It was stated that groups were individuals and could not be “standardised” and the good things suggested, we were already carrying out.
- 10.4 Pennine Way Celebrations on Saturday 26 April – Bill Gallon stated it had been hoped to walk the whole route in a day using different groups, but Natural England had no funding for this. The RA had belatedly responded that they would like to be involved. Haltwhistle and Hexham groups would like to be involved. Mark Nugent would email Bill with contacts in The Journal, Chronicle and BBC.
- 10.5 Heritage Way (Bill Gallon) – Progress being made to improve this route in the next 12 months, with possibly the RA doing way-marking. There may need to be some minor alterations in the Weetslade Colliery and Backworth areas. There was to be a meeting in Gateshead with other Local Authorities. Judith was willing to do the write-up.
- 10.6 Malcolm McVey mentioned that 2 groups had no Committee members.

Next Meeting: Annual General Meeting on Saturday 31 January – Neil would advise the speaker that discussion could include something about falling membership and the RA New Vision Document.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.35 pm.