

**Minutes of Executive Committee of Northumbria Area Ramblers
held at St Nicholas Church Hall, South Gosforth, Newcastle
on Monday 21 January 2019 at 7pm**

Present:

Mike Webber, Area & C/L/S Chair	Judith Taylor, Tyneside
Neil Allender, Rights of Way Officer	Alison Emslie, Gateshead
Steve Edwards, Ponteland and Area Treasurer	Malcolm McVey, Area Membership, Tyneside
Richard Fletcher, Vice Chair & Durham	Bill Gallon, Independent
Pauline Hawdon (Mins.), N&D CHA/HF R.C.	Tony Royston, Chair Derwentside
Rob Hutchinson, S/L-SWC, Independent	Nuala Wright, Access Officer
	Wendy Maxted, Tyneside

Action

1 Apologies for absence: David Crowe, Moira Pearson.

2 Minutes of the previous Executive Meeting were approved.

3 Matters arising:

3.1 Heritage Way

- Leaflets had been circulated.
- Cost of including a leaflet in “The Northumbrian” magazine depended on weight. **Action - Bill Gallon**
- “The Northumbrian” may be willing to include an article on the Heritage Way. **Action - Judith Taylor**
- “Walk” magazine – unable to include an article in Spring edition, but it would be in the Summer edition.

3.2 Lost Ways

Mike had sent out a reminder; and mentioned it at the Area Council meeting, it was included on the website and was on the Agenda for the AGM.

3.3 2020 AGM – because of logistics, it was agreed that it would be better to car-share than arrange a coach.

3.4 Flexi Groups – no response from Dianne Simcoe.

4 AGM 2019

4.1 Judith Taylor would like to withdraw from the Committee as Training Officer but was willing to put groups in touch directly with the Trainer, Richard Holmes. All other Officers agreed to re-stand although Steve Edwards would like to step down in 2020. Some discussion took place regarding “Independent” Members; Mark Nugent would be asked whether or not he wished to continue as an Independent Member. **Action Mike**

4.2 Speakers – Jack Cornish was to speak on “Lost Ways” and he hoped to include a working example of a lost way in the Northumbria Area.

4.3 Neil Allender agreed to collect Malcolm McDonnell and Jack Cornish from Newcastle Central Station to transport them to Chester-le-Street in time for the start of the walk.

4.4 A visit to St Cuthbert’s Church to see the Lindisfarne Gospels was to be included in the walk.

4.5 Richard Fletcher would like guidance from the meeting regarding discussions for General Council on (a) sharing footpaths with horses and bikes, (b) the APP to be used at the beginning of walks to record membership. This led onto a discussion about health & safety on walks.

5 Priorities for 2019

5.1 **Revised Format for Area Report** - A readable and colourful format for the Area Report had been shown those who attended the last Area Council meeting. The new report may be re-designed or remain similar to the Devon Impact Report. **Action Mike & David**

5.2 **Business Plan** – Suggestions included:

- individual members of the Executive Committee visiting all group AGMs.
- Improving communications with groups – discussions at Area Council meetings, not just a standard group report; or possibly an alternative evening. A day-time meeting would preclude any working members.

5.3 **Encouraging members** – Jack Cornish will endeavour to enthuse and encourage our members to want to find these lost footpath and attend the training courses which would be arranged for the Spring. Details would to be sent to Chairs and Secretaries and put on the website in a prominent place. **Action Mike & Tony**

5.4 **Area Secretary Vacancy** – Wendy Maxted (Tyneside) had volunteered to consider it. Alexa Rainsford (Tyneside) had also offered. It was suggested that Alexa be asked to join the Committee as there were other vacancies.

Action Mike

5.5 **Walking Festival & Great North Walk**. Mike would have liked to have seen the Great North Walk reinstated and sponsored by Northumbria Ramblers. However the company that owns the name GNW want to hold onto it and not share it with us. Therefore Mike would like to start our own Northumbria Walking Festival before the Great North Walk people resurrect the Great North Walk again. It will be placed on the Area Council agenda for further discussion. Nuala suggested that this could be included in the Walking Festival.

Action Mike

5.6 **Membership** – a shared leaflet drop would cost £25 per thousand; £50 per thousand if a single leaflet drop is done. There may be less wastage if specific postcodes were targeted. Consideration to be given to expenditure, the target postcodes and when to start. To be added to Area Council agenda for further discussion.

Action Mike

6 **Treasurer – Steve Edwards**

Current balance = £3,428.80

Group allocations for 2018-19 were paid in November

The year-end annual returns process was completed on time. He was now collating signed accounts for despatch at the end of January but awaited information from one group.

The next payment of £1,250 from Central Office was due at the end of January.

Unity Bank had started charging for cheque and cash deposits.

7 **General Council 2021** – Our submission for Northumbria Area to host the meeting in 2020 had missed out due to our location in the North as the 2019 meeting is also in the North (Manchester). It had all but been agreed we would host it in 2021. Approximately 6 stewards and some walks' leaders would be required. All other arrangements would be made by Central Office.

8 **General Council 2019** – 13th & 14th April 2019 at Manchester. Three of the Executive Committee would like to attend - Mike Webber, Richard Fletcher and Alison Emslie. All groups would be contacted asking if any members would like to attend as a visitor. Two Delegates are to be paid for by Central Office and one visitor by the Area.

Action Mike

9 **Officers Reports**

9.1 **Footpaths** – Neil Allender

- Morley Hill farm footpath, near Dinnington, was finally to be reinstated.
- It had been agreed that Heritage Lottery fund would be used for a crossing point and stepping stones at Smoutel Ford (near Alston).

9.2 **Heritage Way** – Bill Gallon

Had a meeting with Gateshead Footpaths Officer, Zoe Jones, who would deal with problems around Wylam, where a fixed spiked harrow was close to the route. Some waymarks were to be finished in North Tyneside, and problems in the Sunderland area were being resolved.

10 **Any Other Business**

10.1 Cliff Ludman had terminal cancer and was now living with family. He had been Durham Secretary for over 20 years and a dedicated RA member.

10.2 Judith Taylor had brought display boards which were available for use by all groups. The current display of the Heritage Way would be used for the AGM.

10.3 Website errors – Each page was the responsibility of an individual officer – Alison said she would send out an email informing everyone who had responsibility for which area of the website.

Action Alison

10 **Dates of future meetings –**

AGM – Saturday 2 February at Chester-le-Street Cricket ground.

Area Council – Monday 15th April at St Nicholas Church Hall, South Gosforth.

Executive Council – Monday 7 October 2019

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.