

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE NORTH EAST LONDON GROUP OF THE RAMBLERS HELD ON MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2024

Present

Susan Teece (Chair), Annette Warrick (Secretary), Loraine Meadows (Treasurer), Anna O'Sullivan (Membership Secretary), Laura Jacobs (Walks Organiser) Garry Gerrish (London Area Rep), David Pennington (Deputy London Area Rep), Lucy Robinson, Carrie Thompson, Suzanne Easton, Keith Evans, Tim Sai-Louie (Observer & Chair of Inner London Area)

1. Welcome and Introduction from the Chair

Susan welcomed attendees to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Apologies for Absence

Alan Lazarus, Mike Atkinson, Angus Andrew and Denise Bertuchi

3. Draft Minutes of the 2023 AGM

Agreed as accurate.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The actions from the 2023 minutes were all cleared. Laura mentioned that she had difficulty nominating NELR for Partnership funding when booking a holiday with Ramble Worldwide Holidays (RWH). The Group is listed as The North East London Ramblers, so is shown under "The" in the drop-down menu on the RWH website. Annette advised that she had tried to get this changed, but had failed.

5. Annual Reports for 2022-23

a) Chair

Susan thanked everyone for their work, including getting the Group used to the new website. She especially thanked Mike Atkinson for all his work as Website Manager over several years. She advised that the Group looks good for the future.

b) Secretary

Annette provided a written report.

c) Membership Secretary

Anna provided a written report. It was noted that membership had increased. August had been particularly good for new members, but we don't know why.

d) Treasurer

Loraine provided written accounts and advised that a draft had been seen by the Treasurer of Inner London Area and Garry. She will not seek re-election. Given some uncertainty during the year, over the future of our website and its possible financial implications, it was agreed that we should accept our Ramblers funding allocation of £486.14 for the year 2024-25. The accounts were approved.

e) Walks Organiser

Laura provided a written report. She advised that it had been a better year than 2023-24, with fewer transport disruptions. Leaders had covered illnesses and a full programme of walks had been offered on Saturdays and two Wednesdays a month. Thanks to Lucy for organising a walk with London Blind Ramblers and to everyone

who helped on the day. More ideas for weekday walks would be welcome.

f) **Website Manager**

Mike Atkinson submitted a report on 14 November and it was circulated to Members on 15 November. He has advised that he will not seek re-election. The meeting passed a vote of thanks to Mike for providing the Group with a quality website over several years, including adapting it to meet the demands of Covid restrictions.

g) **London Area Representative**

Garry submitted a written report. He noted that there is an increasing number of Ramblers members who are not affiliated to any group, so the increase in NELR membership was remarkable. The meeting expressed concern about the unallocated members, who were missing out on group activities, and this would reduce the pool of people available to lead walks and run groups. Over time, groups could struggle to survive. Previously, every new member was allocated to their local group and they could then change their affiliation if they wanted to.

Tim advised that he had been trying to change the position with Ramblers HQ for a year, without success. Lucy suggested that a forthcoming Ramblers governance review could be an opportunity to raise the issue again.

6. Election of Honorary Officers

The following officers were proposed, seconded and elected unopposed:

Chair: Susan Teece (proposed Loraine, seconded Lucy)

Secretary: Annette Warrick (proposed Laura, seconded Garry)

Membership Secretary: Anna O'Sullivan (proposed Annette, seconded Suzanne)

Treasurer: Alan Lazarus (proposed Annette, seconded Loraine)

Walks Organiser: Laura Jacobs (proposed Lucy, seconded Anna)

Website Content Manager: Vacancy – Annette will cover the role for now

London Area Rep: Garry Gerrish (proposed Laura, seconded Loraine)

Deputy London Area Rep: Carrie Thompson (proposed Annette, seconded Laura)

Footpath Officer and Publicity/Campaigns Officer posts are also vacant, though Garry will cover any footpath issues and publicity will be via the website. It was noted that Capital Ring footpath sections have allocated wardens.

It was agreed that Garry will continue as Independent Examiner of our accounts.

7. Revision of Bank Mandate

Loraine sought and obtained approval to revise the bank mandate, to reflect the change of Treasurer.

8. NELR Website

It was confirmed that the Group will move entirely to the new Ramblers website (<https://northeastlondonramblers.org.uk/>) from 1 January 2025 and walks are already being posted on it. The current website (<https://www.nelr.org.uk/>) will close on 31 December. Annette will remind members and include a link to the new website when she circulates the minutes.

Annette will seek administrator access to the new website and will edit the contents.

Walks leaders are advised to take screen prints of their walk descriptions on the current website, if they wish to keep them for their own records.

Annette advised that the Ramblers Walks App misses out information from walks descriptions posted by leaders on the Ramblers website, so it is best avoided.

9. Any Other Business

Annette advised that she has been trying Plotaroute and had found it useful. It was agreed that she will offer to run awareness sessions for current walks leaders.

Garry proposed a vote of thanks to Loraine, our excellent Treasurer for many years. This was agreed.

10. Date of Next AGM

Monday 24 November 2025 was provisionally agreed, subject to QSA's new lease.