

**NORTH EAST LONDON GROUP OF THE RAMBLERS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024**

Time: Monday 18 November 2024 at 7pm

Venue: Quaker Social Action, 17 Old Ford Rd, London E2 9PJ

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introduction from the Chair
2. Apologies for Absence (page 2)
3. Agree Draft Minutes of the 2023 AGM (page 2)
4. Matters Arising from the 2023 AGM Minutes (page 4)
5. Annual Committee Reports for 2023-24 (page 4)
 - (a) Chair
 - (b) Secretary
 - (c) Membership Secretary
 - (d) Treasurer
 - (e) Walks Organiser
 - (f) Website Manager
 - (g) London Area Representative
6. Election of Honorary Officers (page 7)
 - (a) Chair
 - (b) Secretary
 - (c) Membership Secretary
 - (d) Treasurer
 - (e) Walks Organiser
 - (f) London Area Representative (and Deputy)
 - (g) Website Content Manager (using Joomla)
 - (h) Footpath Officer
 - (i) Publicity and Campaigns Officer
 - (j) Independent Scrutineer of the Accounts
7. Revision of Bank Mandate (page 7)
8. NELR Website (page 7)
9. Any Other Business (page 8)
 - Familiarisation session for a navigation app
10. Date of Next AGM – Monday 24 November 2025 (provisional) is proposed.

ITEM 2 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Annette Warrick)

ITEM 3 – AGREE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 2023 AGM (Annette Warrick)

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE NORTH EAST LONDON GROUP OF THE RAMBLERS HELD ON MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2023

Present

Susan Teece (Chair), Annette Warrick (Secretary), Loraine Meadows (Treasurer), Anna O'Sullivan (Membership Secretary), Garry Gerrish (London Area Rep), David Pennington (Deputy London Area Rep), Mike Atkinson (Website Manager), Alan Lazarus, John Lintott.

1. Welcome and Introduction from the Chair

Susan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Rose Heatley, Denise Bertuchi, Sue Latham, Lucy Robinson and Laura Jacobs

3. Draft Minutes of the Meeting on 15 November 2022

Agreed as accurate.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- We have not found a deputy to cover for Mike in managing the website. We will continue looking and Mike will put a request on the website.
- The agreed changes to the website were made.

5. Annual Reports for 2022-23

Written reports were provided.

a) Chair

Susan thanked everyone for their work in ensuring that we had a full programme of walks during the year.

b) Secretary

Annette updated the meeting that the Group's application to join RWT Travel's Walking Partnership has been successful and she has put details on the website.

c) Membership Secretary

The overall membership number is fairly stable, but we wondered if it is possible to see the numbers of joiners and leavers. Anna has the data and will circulate it. We discussed if new people on our walks are becoming members of The Ramblers and Mike advised that he plans to insert Ramblers' membership numbers for people registered on the website. This will make it easier to identify non-members.

d) Treasurer

Annette apologised for the formatting error in the accounts and circulated corrected copies. Loraine advised that we need to ensure sufficient funding in future years, to cover website costs plus any expenses claims. Our allocation for 2023-24 is £481.63 which, when added to existing funds, should be sufficient. The Group will

make efforts to increase revenue (eg through our Ramblers funding, by increasing the number of members allocated to NELR).

Garry reported that he found the accounts to be very thorough with no concerns.

e) **Walks Organiser**

Laura sent apologies for absence. Susan led thanks to Laura for ensuring that we had a full programme of walks throughout the year.

f) **Website Manager**

Mike reported that, to be consistent with The Ramblers, the website domain has been changed to www.nelr.org.uk. This caused some access issues which have been resolved. He plans to make it easier to check against Ramblers' membership information and then to identify non-members using the website for a trial period.

g) **London Area Representative**

Garry advised that the Chair of Inner London Area is stepping down and the Secretary has already resigned. Therefore, they are looking for people to fill these vacancies. There has been considerable unhappiness from other groups about Walks Manager, but the website is improving.

6. Election of Honorary Officers

The following officers were proposed, seconded and elected unopposed:

Chair: Susan Teece (proposed Mike, seconded John)

Secretary: Annette Warrick (proposed Garry seconded Susan)

Membership Secretary: Anna O'Sullivan (proposed Loraine seconded Garry)

Treasurer: Loraine Meadows (proposed Alan seconded Garry)

Walks Organiser: Laura Jacobs (proposed Susan seconded Mike)

Website Manager: Mike Atkinson (proposed Annette seconded Loraine)

London Area Representative: Garry Gerrish (proposed Alan seconded Mike)

Deputy London Area Representative: David Pennington (proposed Annette seconded John)

Footpath Officer and Publicity/Campaigns Officer posts were left vacant, though Garry will cover any footpath issues and Mike will cover publicity activity via the website. Susan and Loraine advised that 2023-24 will be their final year as Chair and Treasurer.

It was agreed that Garry Gerrish will continue to provide independent scrutiny of our accounts.

7. NELR Constitution

Annette explained the background to this item. An enquiry from a member had led the group to realise that nobody on the Committee or Inner London Area had a copy of the existing constitution. On advice from Ramblers HQ, the committee drafted and agreed a new constitution, using the Model Constitution provided, and the draft was approved by Inner London Area.

There was a discussion about the need for a constitution. Garry advised that it was necessary for our insurance cover and that all other groups in Inner London Area have now been asked to check that they have a constitution.

The NELR draft constitution was adopted by 8 votes in favour to 1 vote against.

Any Other Business

Lucy Robinson has offered to organise a NELR walk with London Blind Ramblers, posting it on the website and asking for volunteers. This was agreed.

There was a brief discussion about The Ramblers' new strategy and the need to encourage more diversity in the membership. There are practical difficulties in running walks for particular groups (ie refugees) due to the cost of travel, but there has been modest change through the Coffee and Stroll walks. It was agreed that Mike will make the website introductory text welcoming to diverse groups of people.

9. Date of Next AGM

Monday 18 November 2024 was agreed.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2023 MINUTES (Annette Warrick)

- 5(c)** Anna has the data [on numbers of joiners and leavers] and will circulate it. (cleared)
- 5(d)** The Group will make efforts to increase revenue (eg through our Ramblers funding, by increasing the number of members allocated to NELR). (cleared)
- 8.** It was agreed that Mike will make the website introductory text welcoming to diverse groups of people. (cleared)

ITEM 5 – Annual Committee Reports for 2023-24

(a) Chair (Susan Teece)

Oral report at the meeting

(b) Secretary (Annette Warrick)

Apart from organising the AGM and taking minutes, I have undertaken minor edits of text on the website, mainly sense-checking, adding full stops at the end of sentences and correcting typos in walk descriptions. Any concerns about a walk were referred to the Walks Organiser. I have cleared emails to Group members as Secretary with the Committee before sending them.

I have learnt Joomla versions 3 and 4, to ensure there is cover for editing content on the new website, and I have assisted walks leaders in navigating Walks Manager, to post details of their walks. While it is tedious to enter walks, it is not difficult.

(c) Membership Secretary (Anna O'Sullivan)

Membership Numbers for North East London Ramblers 2023/24

<u>Year:</u>	<u>Month:</u>	<u>Numbers:</u>	<u>Joined:</u>	<u>Left:</u>
2023	October	376	7	3
2023	November	373	4	3
2023	December	364	2	9
2024	January	369	8	3
2024	February	370	6	5
2024	March	370	6	5
2024	April	375	8	3
2024	May	380	7	2
2024	June	384	9	5
2024	July	380	3	7
2024	August	393	18	5
2024	September	392	9	9

(d) Treasurer (Loraine Meadows)

**Ramblers' Association: North East London Group
Accounts 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024**

2022/23 £		2023/24 £
	Income	
495.97	London Area RA allocation ¹	461.63
£495.97	Total Income	£461.63
	Expenditure	
	NELR Website ² :	
200.00	- Hosting and maintenance of website - Miscellaneous costs (backup, network traffic, etc)	200.00
	Annual General Meeting	
30.00	- Room hire	30.00
30.00	- Copying papers	19.00
97.35	Walkover expenses	85.50
£357.35	Total Expenditure	£334.50

£138.62	Balance of Income over Expenditure	127.13
2022/23 £	Cash in Bank Reconciliation @ 30 September 2024	2023/24 £
555.11	Surplus/deficit brought forward from previous year	693.73
138.62	Surplus/deficit current year	127.13
£693.73	Cash in bank at year-end	£820.86

- 1 We accepted our basic allocation of funding from London Area for 2023/24.
- 2 Our website costs 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023 were paid this year 2023/24. (This has been agreed to rise to £500 for 1 December 2023 to 30 November 2024 and will be paid in 2024/25.)

(e) Walks Organiser (Laura Jacobs)

This concludes my fourth year as NELR walks organiser. I want to thank all our amazing walk leaders for providing so many great days out. As in previous years, I am so grateful to those leaders who have had to be flexible with plans and to those of you for stepping in at short notice when the walk leader has had to cancel. It's great that more new leaders have taken the plunge. I would be more than happy to assist any rambler thinking of leading with walk suggestions. I can also offer (or arrange) company on the walkover and support on the day of the walk. There are loads of walks with instructions and GPX files to download. Some of our leaders, new and not so new, have found GPX to be an easy and reliable way to navigate.

Again, we have provided a walk on every Saturday of the year. This year we had a very successful joint Saturday walk with London Blind Ramblers in Epping Forest, led by Lucy Robinson. We have also had two Wednesday walks every month this year. The consistently popular coffee and stroll which Annette Warrick has run brilliantly for some years now, and it has attracted new walkers as well as regulars. John Lintott and I have organised the other Wednesday walk. In September we finally completed the London Loop and have now embarked on the Capital Ring. Mike Atkinson led a boxing day stroll as well as an evening walk. I want to thank Mike, who will be stepping down as webmaster, for his brilliant, bespoke NELR website and for preparing our transition to the inferior Ramblers one.

(f) Website Manager (Mike Atkinson)

(g) London Area Representative (Garry Gerrish)

There were five meetings of the Inner London Group in the year with all attended by either Garry or David. The meetings averaged around 15 attendees. The new venue for the meetings is near Angel Underground station.

Amongst issues covered in the year was that the walks leading and safety guidance is now largely voluntary. The Area has a total budget of £13,400 covering funding of

its own operations on publicity/newsletters (£1,500), SE Walker (£2,400), practical works (£2,000), meetings (£1,200), administration (£100) and other (£200), plus the annual request from groups (£6,000).

The latest quarterly statistics provided to the October meeting indicate that our group membership has grown over the year. Membership in Inner London as a whole in the same period grew from 4,906 to 5,389, with a growing number of members not affiliated to groups (392 to 622).

It is proposed that the bullet points to be submitted by NELR for the Area Annual Report will state that:

- The Group has continued to provide Saturday walks throughout the year;
- We have a programme of walks on two Wednesdays a month;
- We are closing our own standalone website and email system to be replaced by Rambler's Walks Finder and supported website.

ITEM 6 - ELECTION OF HONORARY OFFICERS

The following postholders are not standing for re-election):

Loraine Meadows (Treasurer) Mike Atkinson (Website Manager)
David Pennington (Deputy London Area Representative)

- (a) Chair
- (b) Secretary
- (c) Membership Secretary
- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Walks Organiser
- (f) London Area Representative (and Deputy)
- (g) Website Content Manager (using Joomla)
- (h) Footpath Officer
- (i) Publicity and Campaigns Officer
- (j) Independent Scrutineer of the Accounts

ITEM 7 - REVISION OF BANK MANDATE (Loraine Meadows)

ITEM 8 - NELR WEBSITE

On 31 May, Mike Atkinson gave the Committee notice that he intends to close the website from midnight on 31 December 2024 and to stand down as Website Manager. On Mike's advice, and with his support, the Committee has been preparing for the transition to the new website: <https://northeastlondonramblers.org.uk/> . This is part of the Ramblers' HQ website and it lacks the functionality of the bespoke website that we have been used to, but it includes technical support and is free. Existing walks leaders have been registered to enter their walks on the new website, using Walks Manager, and some have already tried it out.

Everyone in the group will be deeply grateful for all Mike's support since he started the website in 2002.

ITEM 9 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Familiarisation session for a navigation app (Annette Warrick)

ITEM 10 - DATE OF NEXT AGM – Monday 24 November 2025 (provisional) is proposed.