



White-Cliffs Ramblers Association KT09

Annual General Meeting

13:30 Hrs on 3rd November 2024

Held at St Margaret's Village, St Margaret's at Cliffe, Dover

- 1) **Present:** John Pye (JP), Tony Bristow (TB), Margaret Milsted-Williamson (MMW), Deborah Quow (DQ), John Shale (JS), Andrew Swarbrick (AS), Lee Walker (LW), Roger King (RK), Peter Fletcher, Julia Gillard, Ted Roche, Clair Cunningham, Dale Moorhouse, Kim Pye, Rosie Hall, David Jones, Maureen Jones, Tony DeVoil, Ufuk Ozaktanler, Julie Scott, Dave Russell, Ros Russell, Andrew Searle, Susan Chamberlain, Valerie Pearce, Ray Wood, Richard Frith, Sam Ozaktanlar (Guest speaker)
- 2) **Apologies for absence:** Sue Lomas, Lee Pickup (LP) Anne Hickey (AH), Helena Trevelyan (HT),
- 3) **Approval of minutes of last meeting**
 - i) Date corrected to 5th November 2023
 - ii) Minutes agreed unanimously
- 4) **Matters arising: none**
- 5) **Reports from Committee Members (all previously circulated) – summaries outlined below:**
 - i) **Treasurer's Report for year ended 30/09/2024 (JS)**
 - Group's main expenditure has been for the Clearance Team's work.
 - The main account had a healthy surplus of £787.66 at 30/09/2024.
 - The ring-fenced Festival account had a balance of £2,510.73 at 30/09/2024 with the only significant expenditure from it being a contribution to the costs of reprinting the Kearsney Loop leaflets.
 - The ring-fenced Self-Funded account for members local activities had a balance carried forward of £443.71 at 30/09/2024.
 - The accounts for the year to 30/09/2024 have been independently examined by Robert McDougall.
 - In summary, the group continues to have a strong financial position.

ii) Secretary's Report (LW)

- Took on role from HT following last year's AGM.
- Thanked HT and JP for their help and support in taking on the role.
- 5 committee meetings held in past year
- All agendas, reports and minutes available to committee members through the restricted area on the website.
- Also taken on walk leader role during the past year.

iii) Membership Secretary's Report (AS)

- Current membership total is 470, a small decrease from last year.
- Welcomed 58 new members over the year, but this has been offset by either those not renewing or, sadly, members who have passed away. However, the membership turnover is completely normal.
- All members are encouraged to promote The Ramblers in general and what WCR has to offer.
- WCR remains the largest Ramblers Group in Kent and offers an extensive walking programme throughout the year, as well as member holidays, its footpath maintenance work and other activities.

iv) Walks Co-ordinator's Report (DQ)

- Walk Leaders' Forum (WLF) held 09/03/2024 with 14 attendees. Discussion led approach focused on sharing good practice, safety on walks, navigational skills and practicalities of becoming a walk leader.
- Two new walk leaders recruited in year – Lee Walker and Tony DeVoi – both of whom have been active in leading walks. There are now 31 active walk leaders, and they are thanked for their hard work and commitment for this role.
- Walking Week 2024, between 15 – 21 July, with 13 walks held with an average participation of 13 persons. Three of the walks featured the new Royal Kentish Camino route.
- Walking Programme over past year offered 142 walks ranging in length from 2.8 to 20 miles with an average of 14 walkers per walk.
- WCR incorporated the new Ramblers **Walk Leader Handbook** and **Walker Leader Checklist** into its own guidance during the past year. Risk assessments for individual walks are replaced by a generic risk assessment. Future new walk leaders are now required to undertake the Ramblers Walk Leadership Foundation Course online training module before they can lead walks.

v) Publicity Officer's Report – Covered by JP

- Six articles in South East Walker (part of Ramblers Magazine)
- Continued to be supported by Dover Communityad, publicising walks and activities.
- Facebook group has grown from 437 to 591 members
- BBC Radio Kent interviewed JP to promote the Walking Week which was useful.

vi) Local Footpath Officers Co-ordinator's Report (RK)

- Particular thanks to TB for taking on the western half of the area. Finding it difficult to continue with Co-ordinator's role and is looking to revert to LFO only if a replacement can be found.
- Well served with 8 LFOs, but vacancies remain in the Swingfield, Lyminge and Elham areas.
- LFO path changes work over past year 50% busier than previous year. 21 documents received covering 17 issues in 13 different parishes (not onerous for individual LFOs).

vii) Parish Footpath Observer (PFO) Co-ordinator's Report (MMW)

- Been successful in recruiting PFOs to cover the all bar one of the 53 parishes within the WC area (Lyminge).
- A PFO meeting/workshop was held in the Spring of 2024 at St Margaret's Village Hall with plans for another one next year, but open to all Ramblers this time.

viii) Path Maintenance Team Co-ordinator's Report (JS)

- Team has spent 219.5 hours on clearance work over 53 occasions. 11 registered volunteers, 5 who participate regularly.
- Biggest challenge is trying to match the workload to available volunteers, at times there is more capacity available for additional work.
- Looking forward, JS would like to promote more of the team's work through the WCR Facebook page.

ix) Web Editor's Report (JP)

- Continues to be updated with relevant articles and photos for the Group's activities and now features photos from the recent Majorca walking holiday.

x) Social Secretary's Report – Covered by JP

- After many years as a Committee Member AH has decided to step down. Anne was thanked for her notable contribution to the Committee and Group.

xi) Chair's Report (JP)

- Heartfelt thanks to the existing Committee members and everyone else who contributes on a voluntary basis to the group's activities.
- Would welcome contact with any members who would consider volunteering their time to help support the group's activities and roles.

6) Guest Speaker – Sam Ozaktanlar from Natural England

Sam gave a very informative and engaging presentation on the role of Natural England and the work it undertakes across the East Kent area to protect and maintain the local habitats.

7) Election of honorary officers and other members of the Committee (JP)

- i) One vacancy on the Committee following AH's decision to step down.
- ii) Tony DeVoil approached to join the Committee and agreed to do so, initially on a temporary basis to cover the next few meetings and for him to review after this period.

8) Appointment of an independent examiner of the accounts (JS)

Robert McDougall, will continue in his role as independent examiner of the accounts.

9) Les Preston Photo Competition 2024 (JP)

- 3rd Place – Kim Pye
- 2nd Place – Magdalene Chu
- 1st Place – Clare Hewitt

The top three photos along with the other nine finalist pictures are available on the WCR website and feature in the 2025 calendar. Copies of the calendar can be ordered through JS for £11 each.

10) Kent Area AGM – 1st February 2025 at Wye Village Hall (JP)

- i) Volunteers are required to support the AGM which is being hosted by WCR. This will largely be to help with providing refreshments on the day. Please can those wishing to help contact JP directly.
- ii) AS reminded those present that all WCR members are welcome to attend the Kent Area AGM and, as the host, it would be good see as many of the group as possible there on 1st February 2025.

11) A.O.B.

- i) PB - Proposal for a GEOPark by Dover DC covered during item 6 (presentation)
- ii) Holidays 2025
 - JP - Exmoor, June 2025 – now fully booked with 19 participants
 - MMW – Majorca, Autumn 2025 – proposed holiday being finalised and an email will be circulated to all members soon with further information.

12) Date, time and location of the 2025 AGM

- Sunday 2nd November 2025 at 13:30 hours
- Venue – St Margaret's Village Hall, St Margaret's at Cliffe, Dover

Close of meeting – 15:15