

Annual General Meeting
HUNTINGDONSHIRE RAMBLERS GROUP
Saturday 1st November 2025
Hemingford Abbots Village Hall

Present

Juris Liepa	Chair
John Amdor	Retiring Secretary
Paul Wheeldon	Incoming Secretary
Sarah Pursall	Treasurer
Kim Summerfield	Footpaths Secretary & Webmaster
Mark Howard	Programme Secretary & Membership Secretary
Marion Knight	Publicity Officer

Apologies

Su Hodges, Hazel Turner, Judith Howard, Ayala Marshall

1. Chair's report

Welcome to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Huntingdonshire Ramblers local group.

This is our annual opportunity for all our members to question and comment on our club activities, make suggestions and raise any complaints or niggles. Although I should point out that all the committee are perfectly approachable and can be contacted at any time during the year.

We've had yet another successful year of organising walks. On which subject I'm sure Mark will have more to say later. I invite you all to have a look at the map which shows the extent of our rambles over the last 12 months. Suggestions of locations, themes or ideas for new walks are always welcomed. We're also keen to encourage new walk leaders, to take us on their favourite walks. We're more than happy to help new leaders, advise on routes and accompany you on recces so feel free to ask any committee member or walk leader for more information and guidance. Personally, I really enjoy poring over maps and planning and leading new routes.

We must thank all our Walk leaders without whom our packed programme would not be possible. Regretfully we've sometimes had to cancel or rearrange a walk at short notice,

so we'd encourage you all to join our WhatsApp group so as not to miss out on last-minute updates.

Some of us joined in with the WOW (Walk Ouse Way) event in the summer and we are now starting to get a bit more involved with the Great Ouse Valley Trust as their activities include promoting such things as walking the Ouse Valley Way.

We were also contacted to ask if we would get involved in St. Ives Green Week in June. Marion and I both volunteered to each lead a walk which was included in both our programme and theirs.

We've obtained a supply of ICE, In Case of Emergency, cards and holders which we recommend everyone carries on a walk to help in the event of an accident or illness.

One of my responsibilities is to manage our generic group email address. This receives enquiries from potential new members, people from other groups who want to join us on rambles, information about footpath changes or issues, and lots of junk mail and spam. This includes adverts for walkers' hotels in the UK and abroad, which we choose not to clutter up our website with, but which I have printed off here in case any of you might be interested.

When we come on to the committee elections, you'll see that all of the present committee are prepared and willing to continue for another year. With the exception of John who, after many years as our Committee Secretary has decided to stand down from the committee. We owe John very many thanks for all the hard work he's done for us, not least organising our Christmas pub lunch for the last few years.

I'd like to thank all the committee for their hard work and efforts throughout the year. Thanks also to everyone who has helped with today's lunch.

I still find chairing the committee an interesting task, so I am happy to put myself forward for re-election as chairman for another year. New blood is always welcome though, so if anyone is interested in helping or joining the committee, please let us know.

Finally, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Christmas lunch at the 3 Jolly Butchers in Houghton on Saturday 6th December. If you haven't signed up yet, and want to, please see John.

Are there any comments or questions on anything I have said?

Juris Liepa

Comments

- 1 John Davies offered at last AGM to escalate planning issues to local MP, so far there have not been any such issues passed over.

Action: Kim S.

- 2 The plan for a coach trip at last year's AGM subsequently led to a successful trip in July.
- 3 John Davies planned trip to Greek Islands resulted with a successful break for a small number of our group.
- 4 Steve Rossin asked for replacement plasters and wipes for first aid kits.
Action: Paul W.
- 5 Steve also asked that reflective jackets for traffic safety of back markers on roads. These are used in some situations and should be used routinely.
Action: Paul W.
- 6 Juris suggested that themed walks might attract new walkers.
Action: Mark H.
- 7 Juris thanked John Amdor for his long service as Secretary and a round of applause.

2. Treasurer's Report

Financial Year 1st October 2024 – 30th September 2025

Opening balance: £1,130.39

Closing balance: £1,385.23

Key items of expenditure

£53.82 – Luggage tabs for ICE cards

£52.00 – Village hall hire for AGM

£10.40 – Walk leader first aid kit refresh of items

£76.85 – Walk leader mileage

Income

£321.84 – Ramblers HQ*

£150.00 – Ramblers Worldwide Holidays

*2024-25 Basic allocation - £1.06 per member, 214 members + group base rate £95.00

1. Transactions

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT

DATE	DESCRIPTION	Credit	Debit	ACCOUNT BALANCE
01/10/2024	Balance			£1,130.39
17/10/2024	Transfer	£80.46		£1,210.85
21/10/2024	Hire of hall for AGM		£52.00	£1,158.85
11/11/2024	Walk Leader expenses		£19.35	£1,139.50
11/11/2024	AGM expenses		£11.29	£1,128.21
18/11/2024	RWH Travel Limited	£80.00		£1,208.21
06/01/2025	Stamps for Walks Programme		£20.40	£1,187.81
23/01/2025	Transfer	£80.46		£1,268.27
19/02/2025	Walk Leader mileage		£27.00	£1,241.27
15/04/2025	Transfer	£80.46		£1,321.73
April 25	Members coach trip payments	£204.00		£1,525.73
May 25	Members coach trip payments	£68.00		£1,593.73
20/05/25	RWH Travel Limited	£70.00		£1,663.73
02/06/25	Walk Leader mileage		£30.50	£1,633.23
02/06/25	First Aid expenses		£10.40	£1,622.83
09/07/25	Cambridge Ramblers Coach hire		£264.24	£1,358.59
29/07/25	Luggage tags for ICE cards		£53.82	£1,304.77
30/07/25	Transfer	£80.46		£1,385.23
30/09/2025	Balance			£1,385.23

2 Cash

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT: Cash

Date	Description	Credit	Debit	Account Balance
	Current Balance			£0.00

3 Other

None

4 Pending transactions

N/A

Sarah Pursall

3. Membership Report

We currently have 208 members compared to 221 at this time last year.

	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct	Total
New members into Ramblers	3	6	3	3	15
Existing members into Group	2	-	2	5	9

The reasons for losing members are due to lapse of membership (resignation), transferring to another Group or death as with the sad death of Mr JA Brittain (a member since 1997) whose death was notified to us in June this year.

We issue a welcome email to all new group members; even where they have requested not to receive any marketing material as we (the committee) do not see the welcome email as a marketing piece – much more as a friendly welcome and hurrah!!!

On which I would add we have had a number of comments from members of other groups who have joined our walks commenting on just how friendly we all are.

Finally on the welcome email.....I would add that it includes an offer for new members to look at how they might get more involved in the group as volunteers and/or walk leaders.

I monitor the changes in membership on a monthly basis to ensure that new members receive the welcome email in a timely fashion.....apologies for the month that I was late in doing this.

I would like to add that amendments to membership records are the responsibility of each member and changes to your individual records should be managed through your personal

Ramblers Account and sign in. If you need help in navigating the Ramblers website, then please call and I will happily assist where I can.

There have been a number of 'member enquiries' with regard to changes made in how we communicate the walks programme, the use of the WhatsApp platform and the 'need' for understanding membership activity (such as walks attended and miles walked). In the main these have been positive and I am more than happy to speak with you on these.

From a purely personal perspective I quite like change...change is inevitable in our multifaceted world; especially relating to technology.....we only have to look at the walks mapping tools that we have at our disposal today to see the degree of change in the last thirty years. So, I would welcome the membership supporting the fact that we will not be producing any paper/postal communications unless we have a compelling reason to do so on an individual basis.

Mark Howard

4. Programme Secretary Report

We have had a full and varied walks programme this year. Can I firstly thank the Leaders and of course all the members who have attended these.

In total we will have covered 530.60 miles this year; assuming that the remaining walks are not cancelled. For those of you who like to compare last year was 542 miles and the year before 608. Much of the lower count this year is down to the mid-week walks being quite a lot shorter.

We have had some really good days this year with the Peddars Way trip and another day in London; thankyou Marion, Kim and Tzur. One particular highlight of mine was the Launde Abbey walk led by Richard..... some might think this was a little out of the way but it really was worth the trip.

Can I give a huge thankyou to the Leaders for entering into the spirit of producing commentaries of the walks; the fantastic photographs and videos taken and the artful skills of Webmaster Kim in producing the videos for the Muddy Boots Chronicles.

We are looking at broadening our associations with regard to walks; including a follow up to WOW (Walk the Ouse Valley Way Day) and having further conversations with the Great Ouse Valley Trust. We will keep you updated on how these developments are going.

Mid-Week Walks

I have had a couple of conversations with regard to the evening mid-week walks around the start time and going forward think it best that the walk leader sets the start time. I hope you are all in agreement with this.

Another talking point with regard to 'mid-week' walks (as distinct from mid-week evening walks) was whether we could use the Recce's to invite members along. I am not sure as to the effect it would have on numbers for the Saturday/Sunday but I doubt it would be too negative. Perhaps this again might be best left to the Leader concerned and make a posting on the WhatsApp group.

Walks Leaders

Looking ahead at the coming year we have 11 walks leaders and one in the process of doing the walks online training (three modules that take c3-5 hours to complete). I would like to welcome Richard and Marion as the latest to complete the modules and the patience of all our long serving walks leaders who have now been registered by Ramblers Association through to 2028. The Walks Leader situation is a challenge for us as we move forward and something we do need to discuss.

I would like to close this and give particular thanks to John, Martin and Mike as they step away from leading.....stay safe.

Mark Howard

5. Footpaths Secretary report

Casework

This Group is often contacted for our views as part of a planning consultation process. This may be from the local authorities, landowners or developers.

The cases, and their progress, are recorded on our website at:

<https://huntsramblers.org.uk/footpaths/footpathcasework.html>

Since the last AGM, we have fielded 25 new consultations or issues. Of these, the following can be considered large or long-term issues:

A141 Corridor	Active travel project
Grafham Water Pipeline	Affecting 40 RoWs
Stukeleys	Brookfield Farm: Logistics hub

We also continue to monitor other large-scale (or long-term) cases, such as the A421 / A428 redevelopment and the East-West rail project and also developments at Alconbury Weald, Wintringham and several major developments featured in HDC's recently published local plan (see *BBC website*: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1e302801y7o>).

We heard in July 2025 that, despite our objection, the solar farm at Stow Longa has been approved.

Responses

All cases are initially shared with committee members prior to a response. Generally, we have been able to submit 'No Objection' comments (usually with conditions) as some developers or landowners have been considerate when making changes.

We have however objected to proposals such as the solar farm at Stow Longa, where the plans indicate construction adjacent to, or on, a number of Rights of Way in the area, potentially impacting on the paths network and amenities.

Kim Summerfield

Comments

1. Steve Rossin asked Kim regarding Bythorn Footpath obstruction and that the escalation of the blockage has been escalated to County Council Highways. Kim replied that CCC had recently confirmed action had been taken, with possible escalation.
2. Andy Mackay had passed on through CCC Highways another blockage at Alconbury Sewage Farm where path has been obstructed.
Action: Kim to follow-up with Andy.
3. Kim encouraged leaders to use the free mapping tool on the website.
4. Kim thanked Geoff Stratton for providing his collection of old programmes (duly redacted) which are now available on the website.
5. Andy Mackey and Sarah Orbell had previously helped Bedfordshire with sign repairs under Rights of Way supervision. The question of footpath maintenance in Huntingdonshire had often been a discussion point at committee meetings but it was generally considered that (beyond cutting back hedges over paths and reporting dangerous situations) there was not enough interest among members in this activity.

6. Web Master report

Website

I have been editing the Group's website for 6 years.

We use the website as the main source of information about our Group. This is supported by Facebook and the WhatsApp Group.

Website features include:

- Walks Programme (and any updates)
- Mapping tool for people to design and edit their own routes
- Guidance to walkers, new and old
- Information on the committee, leaders and other volunteers
- Footpaths issues
- Stories and photos recording our walks over the years (aka Muddy Boots)
- News about social aspects of our group

With Geoff's help, I have added a collection of previous Walks Programmes (back to 2012) which may be useful to leaders for ideas, or just to browse through.

Muddy Boots would not be possible without the contributions of the various leaders for their accounts of their walks and for the photos and videos. We now have over 250 illustrated accounts and movies of our outings.

Facebook

Facebook was originally intended as an interactive tool for members but this aspect is now best served by WhatsApp. Nevertheless, it still reaches out to users (and non-members) as an additional source of news and also signposts readers to more detailed articles on the website.

Kim Summerfield

7. Publicity Officer Report

WhatsApp

Currently we have 64 members signed up. I believe we have captured the most regular walkers who wish to be a part of this community. I personally like the way it is developing into a "community" rather than just a message board and propose to keep it that way. If you haven't joined but would like to, then please speak to me later and I can send you a link.

Publicity

Back in January, Mark and I went on air at Huntingdon Community Radio to talk about our group in the “Over to you” slot. I know some of you listened in and thank you for your comments. Also, during the year, we have had several mentions in local online and printed magazines, such as Riverporter, Oundle Life and Sawtry Eye. I provide a short write up, a photo and steer readers towards our website for more complete walk information. Whilst we feel it is good to keep our presence in the public eye in this way, I am aware that there are plenty of other offerings for people to “go for a walk”, so really the best way of spreading the word about who we are and what we do is here, in this room. Please tell your friends about us and encourage them to come along. A lady recently said to me - “Oh Ramblers, you do really long walks don’t you.” Well no, that’s not all we do. We do a whole lot more.

This year, for the first time in a long time, we had a coach trip to walk part of the Peddars Way in Norfolk, and despite the weather trying to spoil things I feel the idea was well received. I’ve already had a suggestion for next year’s coach trip, thank you Jen (in the room?) The World’s Most Dangerous Path, umm. Maybe not all of you will come back! It was good to work collaboratively with the Cambridge group on that project, and build links with neighbouring ramblers. Having done it once, it’ll be easier to do again. And thanks to the power of WhatsApp some of the group were able to organise a last-minute walk to support our friends at Great Ouse Valley Trust who were promoting the OVW with a WOW Day in July. It’s been lovely to see several of you wearing your t-shirts on subsequent walks. Your committee has discussed the idea of having a Hunts Rambler t-shirt designed, and would welcome any thoughts you have on that. Juris had already outlined in his report the recent meeting we both attended with the OVT, so I will just add that I am excited at the idea of getting more involved next year. The River Great Ouse runs through our patch, and walking is what we do best.

I have probably strayed away from talking about publicity, but you can probably tell that the social side of group walking is something that I am keen to promote. And just to repeat what my colleagues have already said, If you have any thoughts on walks or events for us next year then please come and speak to us.

Finally, a reminder about ICE cards and holders.

Marion Knight

8. Election Of Officers/Committee Members

Group Chair	Juris Liepa	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		
Group Secretary	Paul Wheeldon	new in post
Proposed Kim Summerfield, Seconded James Knight		
Group Treasurer	Sarah Pursall	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		
Programme Secretary	Mark Howard	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		
Membership Secretary	Mark Howard	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		
Footpaths Officer	Kim Summerfield	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		
Web master	Kim Summerfield	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		
Publicity Officer	Marion Knight	continuing
Proposed and seconded unanimously		

Action: Paul Wheeldon to Notify Ramblers HQ of new committee members and Retirement of John Amdor

Decision: Paul Wheeldon to replace John Amdor as third authorised person for payments where 2 are sometimes required.

Signed as a true record of the meeting.