



Message from the Area Chair - Roy Hunt

It is at this time of the year that I often reflect on both the past and the future, and so it is in this message to Area News. Over the past ten years or so there have been major successes: the CROW Act has extended the areas where we can walk freely to enjoy much more of our beautiful countryside, and the development of the England Coast Path has given far greater access to our wonderful coastline. Both have benefitted us locally. But over a similar period, we have seen far too many problems beset our charity. All of these, to my mind, could and should have been avoided by the Board of Trustees and Chief Executive of the time.

Looking to the future, we still have a major problem with membership decline. The statistics suggest that whilst we still attract relatively large numbers of new members, we lose too many in their first year. This translates into the fact that across the UK we are losing Groups through consolidation and there are threats that some Areas will also have to be consolidated. The main driver to these changes is the inability of some Group committees and Area Councils to fill their constitutional positions (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer).

Recently, the Board of Trustees announced their new three year plan. I have read it in detail to understand what we might see if it is implemented successfully. The plan gives me cause for concern; let me explain why. A charity is nothing without its members who are its supporters and volunteers. The downward trend in membership (recently reported at about 5% decline over 12 months) is very worrying. Yet, there is not one word in the plan regarding membership recruitment or retention. I would divide the plan into three parts. Much of it is "more of the same" in terms of campaigns and walking initiatives. What is different is very much inwardly focused on improving the facilities in Central Office and communications within Ramblers. The third part is about creating new revenue streams which is needed as membership income declines. I can see nothing in the plan that ordinary members in our Area will see as different from today except perhaps more and better targeted mailings from Central Office.

Area Annual General Meeting

On the 27th January 2018 at 2pm we have our Area AGM. Before then we need to find a new Area Secretary to replace Tom Halstead who is sadly (for us) moving away from the area. Volunteers please! At the AGM we will have a presentation from one of our Board Trustees. I am looking forward to hearing what the Board and Central Office will be doing to support our Area better over the next three years of their plan. If you are interested in the past, present and future of the Ramblers, both locally and nationally, then please put this date in your diary. The meeting will be in Newport Village Hall (close to the end of the M62). Our guests this year will be Rebecca Dawson (Trustee) and Vanessa Griffiths (Ramblers CEO).

May I conclude this message by wishing everyone a very happy, healthy and prosperous new year.



Notice of Area AGM

All East Yorkshire & Derwent Area Ramblers members and representatives of affiliated organisations, are invited to attend the **Annual General Meeting at 2.00 pm on Saturday January 27th 2018 at Newport Village Hall, Main Road (B1230), Newport, East Riding of Yorkshire HU15 2PP.**

Prior to the meeting there will be a 6 mile walk starting from Newport Village Hall at 10.30am. The Village Hall will be open from 12pm if walkers wish to eat their lunch prior to the meeting; alternatively there is a village pub serving food, plus an Indian Restaurant and three takeaways nearby.

After the formal meeting and a short break for refreshments, Rebecca Dawson a member of the Ramblers Board of Trustees and our Chief Executive Vanessa Griffiths, will address the meeting and be available to answer questions.

VACANT POSTS Nominations for all posts are invited. No nominations have so far been received for the posts of Vice Chairman, Footpath Secretary for Hull and East Riding, Access Officer, Publicity Officer, Minutes Secretary for Area Council.

Pocklington Group Footpath Maintenance or a “Rights of Way One Stop Shop”

Pocklington Group's Footpath Maintenance Team continues to carry out monthly tasks on rights of way in their area and that of neighbouring Howden and Goole. A variety of work has been completed during 2017, including under and over - growth clearance, gate and bridge repairs, widening paths by brush cutting and laying hard core, refurbishing Yorkshire Wolds Way furniture and not least, replacing scores of missing or damaged way mark posts.

From a core of nine volunteers, a minimum of six are usually available for working days. Operating in a style that could be called a 'Rights of Way One Stop Shop', activities include:-

1. Some members carrying out Parish path surveys and reporting problems on line to ERYC's Countryside Access Team.
2. In liaison with Countryside Access Officers, undertaking parish path projects resulting from surveys or reports by the public.
3. Contributing to maintenance tasks on the Yorkshire Wolds Way
4. With an eye on a 2026 cut off for restoring lost rights of way, identifying un-recorded paths suitable for investigation.



As Pocklington and Beverley Group volunteers are routinely doing maintenance in East Yorkshire, Ramblers members are encouraged to report footpath problems to ERYC.

Working on path problems gives an insight into how rights of way interlink and importantly it demonstrates Ramblers commitment to preserving the paths network. Photographs showing a path problem before and after reflect a sense of achievement.

Tony Corrigan Pocklington Group

Succession Planning – New Webmaster for Area Website Needed

When I took on the Webmaster's role in January 2012 I took the opportunity to change the website from an unsupported, obsolete system to create a fresh look and a user friendly website. To do this I used new software, administered and hosted by a group of volunteers who run **Ramblers-webs.org.uk**. Our Area was one of the original members of the website, whose membership now exceeds 200.



This group helps with the development of websites and assistance is always available through a forum of web masters. Advice, guidelines and instruction documents have also been created and are available on line. Help is always at hand, being only an email/phone call away.

Like all technology, websites continue to be improved and upgraded. Fortunately, knowledge of computer coding and technology is not a prerequisite- keyboard skills, creativity and initiative are more desirable.

I am now looking for an interested person[s] to take over as I intend to step away from the role at our January 2019 AGM. Ideally, they could shadow me in 2018 to enable a build - up of knowledge and skills for a seamless hand over.

Please contact me if you are interested or would like further information about the role.
Tony Corrigan - Webmaster & Pocklington Group

Area Camp 8th-11th June 2018

The Area Camp will be held as usual on the second weekend of June, from Friday 8th to Monday 11th June. Although the venue is still to be finalised, it will be in the Lake District, in the Keswick/Derwent area. For further information please contact Wayne and Donna Dosdale, e-mail: dosdale99@hotmail.com

News from the York Group - Ian Reavill

The York Group have enjoyed celebrating Christmas in their different sections. The Amblers, the Tuesday Group, the Public Transport Group and Wednesday Walkers - all had their own well supported festive lunch.

The Wednesday Walkers used the occasion at the Carlton Inn, Carlton Husthwaite, to present Tom Halstead with a framed certificate from Ramblers Central Office for services to Ramblers over many years. We had nominated Tom for this award to recognise all the work he has done for the York Group over many years, as well as his sterling efforts with open access, the coastal path, and of course, last year's Ramblers General Council at York University. Tom and wife Di are still actively involved with the group, but will be moving in the near future to be near their family in the Midlands. They will both be sadly missed.

This year the York Group will be celebrating their 50th anniversary. No doubt we will be celebrating the occasion, perhaps recreating our first walk in 1968. Amazingly, David Nunns, who is still our footpath officer, was one of the founder members.

Howden and Goole Group setting off in freezing temperatures for their Christmas lunch walk



David Nunns- nominated for Ramblers National Volunteer Award

Ramblers Volunteer Award recognises special volunteers or groups of volunteers for their outstanding contributions to the Ramblers and walking. David Nunns has acted as footpath secretary for York and surrounding area for the past 50 years. In 1968 David, Geoff Eastwood and Richard Kenchington decided to set up the York Ramblers Group. At first David was doing the work of the equivalent of 6 committee members – General, Footpath, Environment, Membership, and Walks Secretary, and even Treasurer for a short time! Eventually he became solely the Footpath Secretary, a role that he still carries out.

How many times have you reported a footpath problem – and how many times have you complained on the day, and NOT reported it? Every time a report goes to North York County Council Rights of Way Department, a copy goes to our Footpath secretary, David Nunns. He and his committee also see planning applications, which affect footpaths. His report is always the most thoroughly discussed at committee meetings, and his knowledge is prodigious – even York Council and NYCC have been known to ring up and ask for background information on current problems!

After such a long time, it is understandable that he and wife Enid are still pruning the shed full of accumulated paperwork, so that it can be put into York Group Archives. Compared with a couple of boxes deposited by the secretary covering all other activities, it is truly monumental.

We have much to thank David for – there would be far fewer paths to walk otherwise! We hope that a National Volunteer award will recognise the debt we owe to him. Vera Silberberg, York Group

Free Navigation Training - Sam Borman

Do you sometimes get lost? Are you occasionally confused by what's on the map? Do you know what a compass can do for you other than point to North? Then why not come on one of my navigation courses? The course consists of you studying a training book, which I will supply. We then go out for a day on the Moors to put into practice what you have learnt, and the best part is that there is no charge for this course.

Each course has only four students and I supply each of them with an OS map of the area and a Silva compass. We spend about 6 hours on the moors, mostly in open access moorland, carrying out a series of navigation exercises in pairs. We do map reading exercises to determine our position using landmarks; use compass bearings to walk across open moorland to a location and use pacing and timing to judge the distance we have travelled. Afterwards we usually go to a teashop in Hutton-le-Hole to talk over the day.

I am a silver level mountain leader and used to lead for HF Holidays and have run 20 of these courses, so I don't usually get lost. If you are interested then please contact me on 01904 500462 or sambo1950-nav@yahoo.co.uk

Editor- I attended one of Sam's courses in September 2016. All the students had a most useful and enjoyable day on the North York Moors. Sam has an excellent knowledge of map navigation and is a patient teacher.



My Pennine Way Experience - Roy Hunt, Area Chairman

My New Year resolution for 2017 was to solo walk the whole of the Pennine Way. I announced this to family and friends on the 1st January whilst celebrating Hogmanay in the Cairngorms and was instantly pronounced "mad". For those who are not aware, the Pennine Way is about 270 miles long and includes about 42,000 feet of ascent.

So, at the end of February, when I assessed that weather conditions were reasonably favourable and the daylight hours long enough I commenced the 15 mile walk from Edale in Derbyshire to Torside where I had arranged accommodation. I started in excellent weather; sunny, dry and fairly mild. However, 3.5 miles in after climbing Jacobs Ladder the weather deteriorated badly (and not according to forecast). By the time I reached the edge of the famous Kinder Scout there was about a four inch covering of snow that obliterated any sign of a footpath and disguised what was underfoot. I was therefore left to guess whether the next step would be on rock, mud or bog and where the path was. The going was very slow and difficult, but I did manage to complete the walk (including a few unplanned detours) as darkness fell, more than a little exhausted.

Over the next few weeks I managed to complete more sections, two or three days at a time, until progress had to stop whilst I walked with my good wife Lauren (my support team) who wanted to walk the Yorkshire Wolds Way with me. Progress then continued as time allowed with sections stretching further and further north taking in places such as Gargrave, Malham, Pen-y-ghent, Hawes, Teesdale, Cross Fell, Tynedale and Hadrian's Wall, leading me to the start of the last section at Byrness. This section is 26 miles long (with no road access) and includes 5,000 feet of ascent. So I decided to attack it over two days with an overnight stop at the Auchope bothy after 19 miles. But, not everything went to plan. The ground was very boggy and, combined with the extra weight I was carrying for the overnight stop, it caused my right calf muscle to start failing quite badly three miles from the bothy. My progress was slowing and slowing, so I eventually realised that I had to give up before darkness would envelop me. A call to the emergency services soon had Border Search and Rescue out to recover me from the path using a six-wheel drive "all terrain" vehicle. The mixture of delight and embarrassment when they arrived is hard to describe. After checking that "limpy" was otherwise OK, I was deposited at the pub in Kirk Yetholm where Lauren came to collect me.

I finished the walk a few weeks later and picked up my certificate and free drink at the same pub that I was previously deposited at. So, my resolution was achieved. Three cheers for Border Search and Rescue who saved my day and many thanks to Lauren for her wonderful support.



The Pennine Way under very different weather conditions

News from Hull & Holderness- Steven Lack chairman

We were featured in the Hull Daily Mail monthly magazine, *The Journal* in December. We had two special walks to round off the year; on Saturday 2nd December a walk around Hull Old Town, centre and harbour, taking in the beautiful new mosaics at the railway station, followed by lunch at the Lion & Key. Then on Christmas Day an appetite-whetting 5 miles from Skidby.

Walking is a good chance to emerge from hibernation and walk off a few Yorkshire puddings. If you have any friends who are contemplating joining a gym (as so many do in January), ask them to compare the cost of gym membership with joining the Ramblers, plus with us you get fresh air, beautiful scenery and good company. And, ahem, the occasional coffee, cakes and beer but only after we've used up all the calories...Thanks to all committee members, walk leaders and of course walkers for a varied and enjoyable year.

Contributions to Area News should be sent to Marian Thomas by 28 February 2018
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