

Herefordshire Ramblers
AGM on 26 November 2022 at Little Dewchurch village hall

Minutes

Present:

Mike Goodwin, Tom Fisher, Howard Jones, Phil Bauer, Margaret Panter, Jen Atkins, Eileen Garvey, Arthur Lee, Marika Kovacs, Lynn Crowfoot, Phil Platt, Judith Hughes, John Winterfeld, Duncan Smart, Martin Shepley, Barrie Morgan, Jacqueline Fryer, Bob Selmes, Patrick Mooney, Jane Wright, Andrew Graham, Satish Daros, Mark Warner, Sandy Kinnersley, Gillain Saunders, Sue Jago, David Jago, Sian Hickman, Ralph Hickman, Malcolm Gardiner, John Bridges, John Birkinshaw. Three lunch ladies not listed.

In attendance: Claire Watkins (RA staff)

1. **Welcome.**
Mike thanked Ross Group for hosting the event, for providing an excellent lunch and an interesting walk, complete with a nature quiz.
2. **Apologies**
John Wride, Ruth Wride, Kate Loxton, John Astle, Gwen Dumbleton, Jan Norman
3. **Minutes of the AGM Meeting held on 20 November 2021 at Putley**
The minutes were approved
4. **Matters arising**
There were no matters arising.
5. **Chairman's report**

“For me this year has to a large extent been the **Herefordshire Trail**. It started in late January when I had an e-mail from Helen Bowden of Orphans Press, the company that runs the “Visit Herefordshire” website. Helen wanted to promote Herefordshire for people to come and walk and enjoy our wonderful countryside. She planned to put the Trail on the website and enable the route to be downloaded. She was however concerned that improvements were needed to get it in good order, could Rambler's help?

We responded by calling on the 25 volunteers that look after the Trail. They went out with secateurs and path clearing tools and cleared stiles and paths. During this operation it was thought that to give the Trail a presentational uplift a new modern Logo was needed. This was agreed by Hereford Group Committee and the new logo was devised by the design team at Orphans in collaboration with John Wride. have you spotted the walking boot on the apple? To encourage the volunteers to go out again we gave a buffet lunch and a supplied them with the new Way markers. I am pleased to say the whole of the 154 mile Trail has been completed. I would like to say big thank you to all those people who gave their time to do what was no mean task.

The working party have done their bit as well putting in new kissing gates, stiles and numerous cross steps. Also, a difficult section above Hoarwithy was cleared and in the summer, we spent two days clearing the bracken on Wapley hill. Those who walk over Garway Hill should no longer get lost with new Way markers and their smart yellow caps showing the way. Finally, after much petitioning, Herefordshire Council put in three new bridges on the Trail just in time for the Herefordshire Walking festival.

The Mortimer Trail in the north has also been getting attention, Mortimer Group have set up a team to look after the Trail. It has been re-waymarked and work making improvements to the Trail is ongoing. The Mortimer Trail Book is out of print and plans are being made for it to be updated. Hereford Area have given approval in principle to give financial support for publishing and re-printing the Mortimer Trail book.

In the summer I did a survey of the four groups, counting the number of walks they did between January and the end of August. This showed that Mortimer, Leadon Vale and Ross were each putting on a walk almost every week. They were also providing more mid-week walks. The figures showed that the number of walks were at least as good as before the pandemic. I think the new system of submitting a walk, approximately no more than a month in advance is encouraging more leaders and more walks. The walks secretaries are doing a great job. And thanks to Andy Lauder for keeping it all up to date on the website. I have to report that Hereford Group are not doing so well. They put on a very limited number of walks. They are very short of walk leaders, and, except for a core of about half a dozen people, they are getting little support from their members. There are key vacancies on the committee that have not been filled. Their situation is of concern and we will have to see how the coming year develops

Footpath Secretary; The county is covered by seven areas with a secretary for each area. They look at Planning applications that are close to PROW and proposed diversions. They provide the Ramblers point of view to the planning authority and do an important job. There is at present a vacancy for Hereford South. If that is something that interests you, John Wride will be pleased to hear from you.

Expenses; I urge all those that have out of pocket expenses to put in claims. Secretaries, you print off reports for your committee, you could claim for inkjet cartridges or printing paper. Footpath secretaries, you can easily do 20 miles looking at planning applications. Committee member who travel to meeting can claim travel expenses. As Arthur has said in the past. No one should be out of pocket. Ramblers money is there, let's make more use of it.

I think we can look forward to another busy year ahead and above all, get out on our walks and enjoy the wonderful varied countryside Herefordshire has to offer."

Arthur Lee pointed out that Hereford Group had 199 members plus 39 who were not assigned to any Group.

6. **Treasurer's Report for year ending 30 September 2022**

The Treasurer's report had been circulated. It was proposed by Margaret Panter, seconded by Martin Shepley that the accounts be adopted. It was proposed by

Arthur Lee, seconded by Jen Atkins and agreed that Suzanne Sherwood be re-appointed as examiner of the accounts.

7 Report by 2026 campaign officer

Tom Fisher explained the background to the scheme and outlined current progress. 140 Applications to modify the Definitive Map have been made. Herefordshire Council has a huge backlog and is not able to process applications at an acceptable rate. They not appear able to comply with a Direction from the Planning Inspector in respect of determining 45 applications made by Herefordshire Ramblers. Financial support from British Horse Society continues but at a rate of £75 per application compared with £100 previously.

8. Election of Committee for 2022/23

It was proposed by Margaret Panter, seconded by Mark Warner and agreed that the following officers be elected:

Chairman: Mike Goodwin
Vice-chairman: Tom Fisher
Secretary: Mike Goodwin
Treasurer: Howard Jones
2026 campaign officer: Tom Fisher
Minutes secretary: Ruth Wride
Footpath Secretary: Philip Bauer
Website editor: Andy Lauder

9. Date of Next Meeting

25 November 2023