

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION – WIRRAL GROUP
MINUTES OF THE 65th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD 29th NOVEMBER 2018

R.A.F.A. Club Oxton Birkenhead commencing 19.30hrs PENDING APPROVAL

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 65th Annual General Meeting which commenced at 19.30hrs and was attended by 70 members

1 Apologies for Absence

Alice Cutts Margaret Evans Angie Holmes Philomena Mason Peter Mason
Charlie McLachlan Linda Starkey

2 Minutes of the AGM 30th November 2017

The Minutes of the 2017 AGM were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Dave Jones and seconded by Brian Grey.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising from the Minutes

4 Chairman's Annual Report

To start let's just take a few moments to remember Isobel Dickson, George Makin and John Thompson and any other members who have passed away this year..... Thank you.

This has been a good year for the club, blessed with one of the warmest summers on record. Do you all remember it?!

However, for a short while we were like the proverbial 'pub with no beer' in that we were potentially a 'club with no coach and no clubroom!' You will agree that this was not an ideal situation for a club like ours! However, it was a moment when members came together to organise ad-hoc walks whilst our coach problems were sorted out.

Thankfully, with regard to the coach, they were sorted out in super quick time due principally to action taken by various committee members whom we should applaud. From being advised at no notice that our then coach supplier had ceased business, to finding and setting up a new contract with P & O Lloyd, we only lost three coach weekends which I think was fantastic.

And, fortunately, the situation with the clubroom, which was, and is, totally out of our hands, seems for the short to medium term at least, to have been sorted out and the status quo will continue.

Financially, the club is in a good position. I am pleased to say that all the club's activities produced positive returns. This year's coach income produced a surplus of over £500 completing the turnaround from a £3000+ deficit two years ago. Also, I am very pleased to say, the clubroom produced a small surplus.

These results, to a degree, justify decisions made by the committee.

Our Wednesday walks added over £470 to the coffers and our social events and weekend holidays over £320. Ramblers Holidays commission added up to a further £170.

However, we can't be too complacent as there was still a slight fall in members using the coach and we would always like to see more members attending the Thursday night meetings at the clubroom.

Now, as usual, I would like to thank on behalf of all members of our Group, the people who make our club world go around. This is a long roll-call but I am pleased to do it as it represents a healthy club.

One of the concerns for a Chair is having people in post to cover all activities.

So, firstly, thanks to our committee:

John Ackerman, who has kept us all balanced in an accounting sense, he also assists in the clubroom and with many other aspects of club.

Brenda Jones my Vice Chair, who, in spite of 'standing down' nigh on two years ago has maintained an acting role of Social Secretary I until now.

Josie Nicholls who has, do I say 'endured'? one of our more demanding roles as Bookings Officer and done so with great fortitude.

Marcela Bellenand, Social Secretary II has continued to surprise us, in a good way, with the diverse range of activities she finds for us to partake in. I sometimes wonder if she is trying to reduce our membership!

Angie Holme, with the aid of a trusty band of seasoned walkers, has produced our Sunday walking programmes which have obviously helped in the success of our coaches this year.

Terry McKenna has continued to maintain our website to a high standard and this year has started adding a Sunday Route Descriptions Archive. An extremely time-consuming job.

Keith Morris took over as our Footpaths Officer this year. Once you have read Keith's report you will get a flavour of just how involved this largely unheralded role can be. Wirral Ramblers must continue with its various inputs to the local footpath network.

Lin Starkey who aside from being kept busy with the day to day business of being our Membership Secretary, has had to contend, this year, with the implementation of GDPR.

John Baker, Helen Clarke, Sue Martin and Berny Goodheart, our committee members have all helped greatly over the year in many ways. Amongst other things, John doubled up as Route Description Officer until September and undertook the mammoth task of updating the Leaders' Handbook and separately producing the Sunday Coach Rambles Manual; Helen has been a constant enabler of clubroom activities, Sue ran this year's navigation courses very successfully and Berny has overseen our presence on Facebook.

Finally, from the committee this year, my thanks to Alice Cutts and Lyn Francis, our General Secretaries whose patience and corrective prowess has kept us all on an even keel.

I would also like to thank Sarah Carroll who has been looking after the Route Descriptions latterly and Brian Hughes who, once again, audited our accounts.

All of our Officers reports are contained within the Agenda booklet.

I have been fortunate to have had consistently good committee members during my time as Chair and I thank all of them for their time and effort over the last three years and for putting up with me!

In addition to myself; Josie, Alice and Lyn, Brenda and Helen are standing down from the committee this time along with John giving up the Route Description role. I would especially like to thank them for all the time and effort that they have put into their roles for the club.

Up for election to the next committee are Sarah Ashcroft, Sarah Carroll and Liz Donaldson. I am sure we all wish them well in their roles.

If the motions that are being proposed later are carried, then the club will need to fill the committee post of Secretary and the non-committee posts of Social Secretary I and Route Descriptions Officer. You all know how important these posts are to enable the running of the club.

Aside from our temporary hiccup with the Sunday coaches the take-up has held steady this year with just a slight fall in numbers. We have placed our new contract with P & O Lloyd and, although I know that there were a few teething problems to begin with, all indications are that this is a reliable and responsible company.

During the year we introduced a new pick-up point in Liverpool for our northerly coaches with a view to widening the opportunity for ramblers to book on walks with us.

Fifty-nine different leaders led 218 varied Sunday walks over the year. Sarah Ashcroft led an incredible nineteen walks, Berny Goodheart led thirteen and Bill Nock and Paul Kravchuk led twelve each. Many thanks to all leaders at all levels We wouldn't be going anywhere without them!

All our mid-week walk organisers report very good attendances this year underlining the popularity of these alternative opportunities to walk. Thanks to all who contribute in making these walks possible, in particular Alice Cutts with the Cs, Sue Martin with the B-s and Janet Belton and John Steel with the Ds. Also, to Gerry Riley who distributes most of the route maps for them.

One of the consequences of our improving finances is that the charges for Wednesday walks will be removed as from January 2019.

Barbara Hackett also reports a good year for our evening walks which benefitted from the excellent summer. What better than to stroll through our Wirral footpaths and country lanes on a sunny evening? Our evening walks also contributed to the Wirral Walks Festival back in May. Thank you to all involved.

Whilst mentioning our footpaths, we ran our second footpaths survey recently. The results of this year's survey showed that in several cases, problems that we had reported last year to our local Rights of Way Officer, had been rectified. This is a pleasing outcome as it shows that our efforts are worthwhile and not ignored. Many thanks to Steve Martin for overseeing the survey again. I hope it will continue as an annual exercise and that our members carry on supporting it.

One activity that does continue annually with respect to our footpaths is footpath clearance.

Many thanks, and appreciation to those who take part in this essential task

This year saw the implementation of fortnightly meetings here in the clubroom. I am happy to report that there has been a slight upward turn in attendances and that a small profit overall has been achieved. The involvement of members giving talks, demonstrations and presentations obviously helped enormously. We have had some smashing evenings, from the 'My Favourite Walk' evening with different members relating their own personal favourites; the affecting talk 'So A Child May Live, given by Carmel Dersch; the boisterous Club Auction loosely controlled by Helen; we have had a Magician; a very impressive Photographic competition; and a visit from the great Mersey Morris Men to highlight just a few. I think those given by our own members especially, add to the entertainment.

Lately, Beryl Sibeon and Philomena Mason have taken on the task of producing the programmes of presentations at the club and have done a great job. Many thanks to them. Thanks too, to Bob Begbie for looking after the library, and to all the stewards that have been shepherded into the kitchen!

However, once again, I have to report that we have no Social Secretary I to take overall charge of clubroom activities. For the last two years and more, the running of the club has been reliant on members of the committee and others filling in to enable the clubroom to function. Now that Beryl and Philomena are looking after the programme for the clubroom, I hope that perhaps a group of regular clubgoers could assist with some of the peripheral duties.

On occasions, charities benefit from our social activities. Claire House; the Christmas Box Appeal; So The Child May Live; and Health Help International being a few of them this year.

Welfare activities for the club were taken over and carried out this year by Angie Swann and I thank her for undertaking this quietly inconspicuous but much appreciated responsibility.

Overall, another busy year for the club. Full walking programmes, entertaining clubroom evenings and plenty of other activities. Thanks to all members who have made this possible and help to maintain Wirral Ramblers as one of the best walking clubs.

So, that's almost it from me. This AGM is my final act as your Chair. I have occupied the role for the last three years and have really enjoyed it. However, I think that is long enough before another person's impetus is needed to keep the club moving forward.

When I took over as Chair, I didn't really know what to expect but, during my time I have found myself plunged into arcane worlds such as governance, safeguarding and GDPR to name just a few. I therefore learnt to always expect the unexpected – never knowing what could crop up next.

Happily, during my time, the committee has been responsible for a lot of good work and has constantly aimed to move the club forward. Some things work, some things take time and others fall by the wayside. Nonetheless, we should always strive to enhance and promote the activities of our club.

Most obviously the implementation of our updated website and its subsequent bedding in has improved communication, facilitated online booking, simplified processes and provided a store for, and access to, a myriad of club information.

Also, in the sphere of communicating, the introduction of our 'all group' emails have sped the dissemination of information and has allowed messages to be sent to the right people quickly.

Last year our 'Adopt a Footpath' was introduced. I was really enthusiastic for this project to take place. It has obvious benefits and is an activity that can raise the club's profile. I reiterate my hope that it remains an annual feature in the club diary.

The Leadership handbook has been updated and a Sunday Rambles Manual created. These are very useful sources of help and information and due to our improved software can easily be updated or amended.

A lot of background administration has been undertaken and updated including the incorporation of GDPR, the defining of committee roles and, hopefully, the updating of the club Constitution.

I particularly enjoyed the times when the club went out into our community. Remember Sarah Head's endeavours in Birkenhead Park and our involvement in Wirral Council's idea for an 'Active Wirral' scheme?

In the pipeline there are proposals for a 'Donate a Gate' scheme for our footpaths; the distribution of First Aid Kits and the undertaking of First Aid courses. However, these are some of the topics for my successor to pick up and continue with. I wish her all the best. I know that I am passing the Chair on to a capable pair of hands.

There just remains for me to thank you all for allowing me the privilege of being Chair of Wirral Ramblers, a smashing club with smashing people. I have enjoyed the time. Thank you.

5 Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts

The Chairman reported that the Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts had been circulated in the Agenda document. The Treasurer acknowledged that there had been a small printing error in the footnotes to the accounts regarding the amount of the legacy from Mr John Thompson but stated the audited accounts were correct.

The outgoing committee had investigated ideas for using the legacy including provision of first aid courses, first aid kits, possibly adopting a footpath or donating and naming a gate. £270 had been used for the purchase of safety keyrings: price negotiated by Area. The 250 purchased have been widely distributed leaving a modest reserve for future years. Members who have suggestions were encouraged to mention them to the committee.

6 Officers' Reports

The reports for 2018 were included with AGM agenda and documents.

7 Matters arising from the Officers' reports

No matters arising from the reports that had been circulated with the AGM report

8 Motions

Three motions had been put forward:

(1) The adoption of a new Constitution. For some years now, the Group has not had a valid Constitution and the proposed version is largely based on the model provided by Ramblers Head Office and adopted by many Groups throughout the country.

Proposed Gordon Clarke, Seconded Terry McKenna

The meeting passed the motion and agreed it should be passed to Area

(2) That the current four committee posts without portfolio be reduced to three.

Proposed Gordon Clarke, Seconded John Ackerman

The motion was carried by the floor.

(3) The post of Social Secretary I be adjusted to being a non committee responsibility'

Proposed Gordon Clarke, Seconded Brenda Jones

Motion passed by the meeting.

9 Appointment of Scrutineers

Scrutineers were not required

10 Election of Officers and Committee 2018

The following Committee and Officers were elected:

Chair	Sarah Ashcroft
Treasurer	John Ackerman
General Secretary	Vacancy
Bookings Officer	Sarah Carroll/ Liz Donaldson
Social Secretary II	Marcela Bellenand
Rambles Secretary	Angie Holme
Membership Secretary	Linda Starkey
Footpaths Officer	Keith Morris
Website Manager	Terry McKenna
Committee Member	John Baker
Committee Member	Berny Goodheart
Committee Member	Sue Martin

Non-committee posts:

Vice Chair	Sue Martin
Social Secretary I	Vacancy
-Clubhouse programme	Beryl Sibeon/ Philomena Mason
Librarian	Bob Begbie
Route Descriptions Officer	Vacancy

Bill Knock volunteered for the Route Descriptions role but added that he would need assistance with the website aspect. Terry McKenna offered to assist in training new committee members.

11 New Chair Sarah Ashcroft

Thanked the Club for giving her the honour of being the next Chair and looked forward to working with the new committee during the forthcoming year. She complimented and thanked the previous Chair Gordon Clarke for his work over the previous three years.

12 Appointment of Auditor

The membership approved the appointment of Brian Hughes.

12 Any Other Business

On behalf of the committee and all members of the Club Terry McKenna thanked Gordon Clarke for his work as Chair. This was followed by warm applause from the meeting.

Jean Beasor thanked members for their kindness and, in particular, for enabling her attendance at the club nights.

13 Date and time of next AGM

The next Wirral Ramblers AGM will be held on 28th November 2019 commencing at 19.30hrs.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.15hrs

Signed:

Annual General Meeting - 29th November 2018

Officers Reports

Treasurer's Report – John Ackerman

This year produced a surplus of £1,594. Coach rambles contributed £568, Wednesday walks £472, the clubroom £89 and other social events £192. Net overheads were £26.

In the year we received a legacy of £15,000 from the estate of John Thompson, a member who lived in Irby, of which we have so far spent £271. We are holding the balance in a restricted reserve, separate from the General Reserve, which stands at £8,039.

I would like to thank Fran Begbie for her support at the Clubhouse on Thursday nights, Beryl Sibeon for her cash collecting most Wednesdays and Brian Hughes for auditing the accounts.

Bookings Officer – Josie Nichols

There have been 47 Sunday coaches this year with no cancellations except for the 3 weeks at the beginning of April, which was due to the unfortunate 'no notice' closure of our coach provider (CASS). We have broken even financially this year, with an average of 44 people per coach. There were a few occasions when the coach was almost cancelled on the Thursday morning prior to the Sunday walk; it is suspected that people wait to see the weather forecast before deciding to book. Of course, the online booking system does make it easier for people to do this. But, please remember that the coach may be cancelled due to lack of numbers on the Thursday, so please book early to ensure the coach goes! There does not seem to be any correlation between venue, distance travelled, pick-up point and numbers on the coach.

The new coach company, Lloyds, who stepped in, in April, is providing us with good service and has now been chosen to be our coach provider from October 2018. Some of our parking spots are giving them a challenge!

Most people now use the online booking system (with approximately 75% paying by bank transfer), thereby further reducing the administration.

There have been 47 new people on the coach, encouragingly most of a younger age group and 28 have joined the Ramblers and most have become regulars.

Rambles Secretary – Angie Holme

The group approach to writing the Sunday coach programme continues apace with advice, help and support from Margie Swann, Andrew Hodgson, Barbara Noden, Peter O'Reilly,

Martin Donaldson, Bill Nock, John Baker, Sarah Ashcroft and Josie Nichols. I thank them all for giving their time. Any suggestions for future programmes always welcome.

The number of Heswall, Liscard and Toby Carvery starts continues to spark healthy discussions. I have tried to make it more equal and the 2019 Spring/ Summer programme will reflect this.

As usual the aim is to have a programme that suits all, from A through to D walks. We have had some new and/or revived venues and leaders have stepped up with some lovely walks. There have also been some new leaders this year which is fantastic news. The Spring/Summer 2018 programme had 6 new leaders and a couple of leaders who were on their second lead. I try to speak to the new leaders both before and afterwards to monitor how it went and to ask if there's anything Wirral Ramblers could do to make it easier. Comments were all very positive from how everyone said thank you at the end of the walk to a special mention going to Sue Martin for her Navigation Skills course

I have also been trying to bring together all the accumulated knowledge of each venue re coach routes/parking, facilities and stops en-route. It is a slow process, but thanks must go to Bill Nock and to Andrew Hodgson. The Lakes and Wales are very nearly as complete as they can be, and I will be moving on to the next area shortly.

Finally, a thank you to all our leaders as the programme would not work without you. You surpassed yourselves this year with the Autumn/Winter 2018-19 programme being printed with only one vacant TBA! Made my job a whole lot easier, thank you. Spring/Summer 2019 out soon!

Wednesday C Walks – Alice Cutts

The Wednesday C walkers have again had a very successful year. We have enjoyed a full and varied programme of walks both urban and rural ranging over Merseyside, Cheshire, Shropshire and North Wales. Along the way we have encountered and survived a number of adventures including but not limited to, a forest fire in Ainsdale and hurricane strength winds on Moel Fenlli. We have welcomed a number of new walkers to our group many of whom have gone on to join Ramblers.

Special thanks go to all our members who contribute to the success of the programme. This includes not only our leaders and this year we have been fortunate enough to add some "new" leaders to our group but all the people who work willingly behind the scenes. For example, in preparing and issuing maps to support the walks, collecting money and selling season tickets and organising the ever-popular Christmas Luncheon. Last but of course not least the many members who walk with us and contribute to the good humoured and welcoming atmosphere which new walkers invariably comment on.

Wednesday B- Walks – Sue Martin

The Wednesday B- walkers have also had a good season this year. Numbers have varied between 7 and 15 with the average 10 walkers. We have ranged from Wales and Derbyshire, the Peak District and Lancashire. We have had some lovely walks, with plenty of variety.

Thanks to all the leaders who have helped lead the walks, to those who have already offered to lead next year, and to all the walkers who came along to enjoy the walk and company.

Evening Walks – Barbara Hackett

The evening walks continue to be well attended, especially with the wonderful weather we had this summer. We had a few new leaders and new walks but if anyone has any ideas for walks could they make contact. Now that the evenings are drawing in we still meet on the first Friday in the month at the Toby Carvery, 8pm onwards. All are welcome.

Membership Secretary – Linda Starkey

Membership of the Wirral Group to the end of September 2018 stands at a healthy 757. Between January and September of this year 53 new members joined.

Wirral Ramblers website continues to be the major source for recruitment and information.

The website also enables existing members to access details of forthcoming walks, social events etc. Most people new to the Ramblers now find out about us online. There have been numerous telephone enquiries throughout the year from prospective new members; information packs have been forwarded to people wishing to join our group.

It is very important that all members in our group check bank statements etc to ensure that their annual membership is up to date. Renewal membership cards are issued in the belief that members have paid or will pay. Possession of an up to date Membership Card, therefore, is not proof either that you have paid or that you are an active member.

Have you ever thought about buying a membership as a gift for a birthday, Christmas or retirement present? If so, you can buy a gift membership online or call the RA on 020 7339 8500

Individual Membership per annum is £35.85 Individual concessionary rate £23

Joint Membership is £47.85 Joint concessionary rate £30.75

Footpaths Officer – Keith Morris

I was co-opted on to the Committee to serve as Footpath Officer from 1 January.

Ramblers HQ updated its handbook for Rights of Way (ROW) volunteers in January which provides useful guidance for any members who have an interest in volunteering to assist with any aspect of ROW work on behalf of the Ramblers. Members can obtain copies from head office.

In response to a request from Ramblers HQ, I wrote to local MPs as part of the Ramblers response to the government's public consultation on the new Agriculture Bill. In essence the Ramblers campaigned for a clause to be inserted in the new Bill to give financial support to farmers who improve public access to their land. This has been included in the second draft Bill, published on 12 September, and due to be placed before Parliament in October. A successful outcome so far but there is need to continue to monitor progress of the Bill through Parliament and lobby local MPs when necessary.

Wirral MBC repeated its Walking Festival from 1-8 May and the Ramblers contributed by leading 5 of the walks on the programme. These contributions from our volunteers help to promote our club as well as the promotion of walking and paths issues in general to the public.

In June the Liverpool City Region published its ROW improvement plan for 2018-28. Two of the Wirral projects completed in the last 10-year programme mentioned in the report were the "Stiles to Gates" initiative and the popular Wirral Circular Trail. The first project was the excellent work Wirral MBC has undertaken in converting all stiles on ROWs to gates. However, from my own observations, it's not entirely complete yet. For the forthcoming 10 years the plan refers to the following projects for new footpaths/cycle tracks:

- a) Croft Retail Corridor - New path - A41 Campbelltown Road Wirral
- b) Wirral Waters Connectivity - North Bank East Gateways to Wirral Waters
- c) Port Sunlight Connections - A41 cycle and pedestrian connectivity – north of Bolton Road roundabout to St Paul's Road Wirral
- d) Wirral Waters Connectivity - Duke Street Phase 2 Wirral
- e) Wirral International Business Park Connections - A41 Carlett Park cycle route
- f) England Coast Path National Trail - Birkenhead to Parkgate (improvements to existing ROWs)
- g) Durley Estate, Prenton to Landican Lane - New Footpath and then on through to Pensby
- h) Heswall Station to Clatterbridge via Brimstage - an all-new three-mile walk, cycle and horse-riding route
- i) Barnston to Brimstage - An all-new footpath

Funding is already in place for some of these projects but still being sought for others (Items g – i). Surface improvements to numerous other popular paths are also proposed; particularly on the Wirral Circular Trail route.

In June Wirral launched a consultation on a proposed Dog Control Public Space Protection Order. I responded on behalf of the Ramblers in support of the proposals. However, the proposal has been withdrawn due to a significant level of opposition from the public.

In September Wirral published a wide-ranging Development Options Review document in response to the Government's requirement on all Local Authorities to publish proposals on how they intend to meet their quotas, imposed by the Government, to meet anticipated new house building needs over the next 15+ years. The current quota for Wirral is 12,000 but it is hoped this figure will be reduced taking population trends etc. into account.

Wirral's proposals include the declassification of an extensive number of parcels of land currently within green belt areas which would almost inevitably lead to their development.

Many of these parcels of land have ROWs either crossing or adjacent to them and it would significantly impact on the District's already limited ROW network and recreational facilities should they built on. After making a more detailed consideration and discussing with the committee I will respond to Wirral MBC on behalf of the group before the 26 October deadline. I would urge all members to consider these wide-ranging proposals and respond to Wirral in a personal capacity.

Wirral weekly programme of Volunteer Path Clearance days continues every Thursday morning until 29 November and I'm pleased to report a number of our members take part in these days. More details can be obtained from robintutchings@wirral.gov.uk 07795 367276 or myself and you are encouraged to take part.

In September, our members completed the second annual survey of all rural and semi-rural footpaths on the ROW network in Wirral. The results of the first year's survey were passed to Wirral MBC earlier this year. My thanks go to Steve Martin who coordinated this work for our club and all the volunteers that helped with the survey.

Steve is currently analysing the results of our second survey to establish the extent, of any improvements made following our first survey. I will follow up Steve's report with the council and ask for action to be taken on the matters we consider to be a priority, particularly where no action has been taken following our first report. However, it's pleasing to report that these surveys confirmed that the general standard of provision and maintenance of ROWs in Wirral is high, particularly in comparison to conditions that we can find when we walk in other areas, for example in some parts of North Wales and Shropshire.

Over the past 12 months Wirral MBC haven't issued any ROW Diversion or stopping orders for consideration.

Acting Social Secretary I – Brenda Jones

This was the first full Programme in which the Thursday Night Clubroom was held fortnightly. Records show that the numbers attending increased on these nights and we made a small profit of £88. Last year we ran at a loss. To recap: The Clubroom rent including the bar staff is £45 (which on research is quite reasonable) and the minimum charge by many speakers is £40.

Once again, we have been lucky to have a number of our own members giving excellent presentations. Helen entertained us with a cookery demonstration and wielded the gavel at the Auction, and Bill and Mark put a lot of work into presenting Quizzes which tested our collective memories.

Carmel Derch spoke about the work she is connected with, a children's hospital in Nepal, and between the auction and her presentation we were able to donate over £200.

We had a guided walk around Oxton and Bob Dennis, judging the Photographic Competition, said the standard of entries improves year on year.

I don't think anyone knew what to expect from 'Through the Eyes of a Magician' but it turned out to be a really good night.

Beryl and Philomena have completed the next Programme and we look forward to seeing you all at the RAFA Club this coming winter.

Social Secretary II – Marcela Bellenand

January: Liverpool guided tours kindly led by Terry McKenna and Angie Holme. These were well attended events despite the cold and very informative. Lunch followed at Wetherspoons in Liverpool.

February: Evening Indoor Bowling at Bromborough. Well attended again.

March: Breakout Liverpool: we had 2 groups in similar rooms of medium difficulty. Neither of the groups managed to break out within the hour but we had a lot of fun. This was followed by lunch in Liverpool.

April: Port Sunlight Tour and River Park Walk: A very informative tour by a friend of one of the ramblers, who lived at Port Sunlight when young, so we had good first-hand information of what life was like living there apart from historical facts. The river park walk offered good views of Liverpool.

April: First of the canal boats Preston Brook to Lymm, skippered by an acquaintance of Marcela. A 6-hour lovely return journey followed by a walk around Lymm dam and a pub lunch.

May: Two more canal boat trips as above. These were very well attended events and two of these were bathed in sunshine all the way!

May: Weekend in Llanrug in a self-catering cottage. We were lucky with the weather and did some great walks in the area. We had dinner out one evening in the local pub.

June: Lunch time Barbecue at Thurstaston Common. Again, lucky with the weather we had a lovely day eating, drinking, socialising and playing boules thanks to Joy and Malcolm for the game. This event might be better held just after one of the summer evening walks which might be more suitable to most.

July: The 'annual' kayaking trip from Bridgnorth, always well attended. Including a pub lunch halfway and a return trip on lovely old trains.

August: No event.

September: Kayaking on Liverpool docks. Unfortunately, not very well attended due to constant rain but the 5 of us who went still had a great time!

October: Ice skating in Deeside Leisure Centre followed by optional lunch nearby.

November: Indoor Climbing in Caernarfon followed by optional lunch nearby. Possibly also a cinema outing on the Wirral.

December: Christmas disco at Heswall Squash Club.

Website Manager – Terry McKenna

The website continues to be well used by members. Our compliance with the new Data Protection Regulation makes it impossible to obtain the detailed site usage statistics we received in the past. However, since the website was redesigned in January 2017 the home page has been viewed 79,000 times.

In the last year the website page with Wednesday Walk locations has been viewed 1,300 times. In February this year we started creating an archive of Sunday Walk Route Descriptions. There are now 650 on the site covering most of the last 13 years of walks. The pages with these RDs have been looked at 7,700 times.

The online Sunday coach seat booking system has been in operation for a year now. Seat utilisation statistics are given below. (These stats do not include members joining the coaches 'on spec'.)

Percentage of coach seats booked:

Oct 17:	79	Jan 18:	80	Apr 18:	98	Jul 18:	89
Nov 17:	87	Feb 18:	94	May 18:	77	Aug 18:	84
Dec 17:	74	Mar 18:	88	Jun 18:	96	Sep 18:	83

Percentage of coach seats booked cont'd:

At the beginning of the year 93% of those booking seats had used the on-line system. Of those 66% had paid via bank transfer, 17% by cheque and 17 % with cash. Between July and September this year 94% used the system, 74% paying via bank transfer, 17% by cheque and 9% with cash.

On average, only 2 or 3 members each week who book a seat do not use the online system.

It is important that any website remains accurate and relevant to its intended users. Please contact us with any comments.

Coach and Walk Statistics 2010 - 2018

	Number of Walks offered by grade							Number of Leaders
	A+	A	B+	B-	C	D	Total	
2018	-	44	46	47	46	35	218	59

2017	-	48	47	47	45	35	222	59
2016	-	51	50	50	49	41	241	61
2015	-	49	49	50	50	38	236	65
2014	-	48	48	49	49	37	231	68
2013	-	47	48	40	50	30	215	70
2012	1	35	36	36	38	14	160	70
2011	2	40	40	40	43	11	176	67
2010	1	46	46	45	47	10	195	63

Number of members on various grade walks

	A+	A	B+	B-	C	D	Total	
2018	-	237	482	545	500	284	2043	
2017	-	281	533	585	392	268	2068	
2016	-	308	525	618	415	274	2140	
2015	-	317	589	597	500	309	2312	
2014	-	317	506	618	549	312	2302	
2013	-	279	496	530	572	260	2137	
2012	1	183	419	341	441	122	1507	
2011	8	203	408	452	463	89	*1623	*Figures not available for all walks
2010	2	286	463	579	750	66	2146	

Number of Walks per Leader

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	17	19
2018	19	7	5	6	5	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	1
2017	22	8	6	6	2	5	4	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
2016	14	11	9	10	4	3	4	1	1	0	1	-	1	-	2	-	0
2015	14	9	15	7	11	2	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	0
2014	17	10	12	10	12	3	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	0
2013	18	18	10	7	8	2	4	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	0

2012	21	15	16	3	7	3	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2011	21	17	13	8	3	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	0
2010	10	14	7	8	7	2	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0

Ramblers' Association - Wirral Group
Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ending 30 September 2018

	<u>2017/18</u>		<u>2016/17</u>	
	£	£	£	£
<u>INCOME</u>				
Coach rambles	24,794.00		24,487.50	
Less costs	<u>(24,225.90)</u>	568.10	<u>(25,095.05)</u>	(607.55)
Clubroom admissions	2,068.40		3,107.50	
Less rent	<u>(1,305.00)</u>		<u>(2,115.00)</u>	
Less costs	<u>(674.56)</u>	88.84	<u>(1,052.97)</u>	(60.47)
Weds walks: income		471.50		517.00
Social events	990.00		1,503.00	
Less costs	<u>(798.00)</u>	192.00	<u>(1,385.60)</u>	117.40
Weekends/Holidays	130.00		852.00	
Less costs	<u>-</u>	130.00	<u>(750.00)</u>	102.00
Ramblers Holidays commission		170.00		370.00
Legacy	15,000.00			
Less costs charged	<u>(270.90)</u>			
		14,729.10		
Transfer to Restricted Reserve		<u>(14,729.10)</u>		
Total income		<u>1,620.44</u>		<u>438.38</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
Programmes	460.00		460.00	
Less: Area grant	<u>(460.00)</u>	-	<u>(460.00)</u>	-
Library		-		62.32
General administration	428.59		485.86	
Less: Area grant	<u>(402.34)</u>	26.25	<u>(392.44)</u>	93.42
Total expenditure		<u>26.25</u>		<u>155.74</u>
Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure		<u>1,594.19</u>		<u>282.64</u>

Notes

In February 2018 a legacy of £1500 was received from the estate of John Thompson, a member who lived in Irby. Part of his legacy has been used this year to buy ID keyrings.

Ramblers' Association - Wirral Group
Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2018

	2018	2017
	£	£
<u>Group Funds</u>		
General Reserve at start of year	6,444.97	6,162.33
Add/subtract excess/(deficit) of income over expenditure	1,594.19	282.64
General Reserve at end of year	<u>8,039.16</u>	<u>6,444.97</u>
 <u>Restricted Reserve</u>		
Received in year	15,000.00	
Costs charged	(270.90)	
	<u>14,729.10</u>	
	<u>22,768.26</u>	<u>6,444.97</u>
 <u>Represented by Current Assets</u>		
Cash at Bank	23,280.26	6,793.97
Cash in hand	47.00	136.00
Debtors and prepayments	50.00	100.00
	23,377.26	7,029.97
 <u>Less Current Liabilities</u>		
Creditors	-	-
Deposits received in advance	(609.00)	(585.00)
	<u>22,768.26</u>	<u>6,444.97</u>

Independent Examiner's Report

Having carried out procedures in accordance with the Area and Group Independent Examiner's Guidelines I consider the Wirral Group accounts to have been properly prepared and to give a true and fair view of the Group's finances for the year to 30 September 2018.




Signed Brian Hughes

Gordon Clarke

Date 16th October 2018

Name and Address Brian Hughes
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 Wirral
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