



Surrey Area AGM

Minutes of Meeting held at the Wilfrid Noyce Community Centre Godalming on Saturday 3rd February 2024 at 2 pm

1 Welcome and Introduction

Andrew Piercey, Chair of the host Group, Godalming and Haslemere, welcomed everyone present and introduced the Town Mayor of Godalming, Cllr Adam Duce.

The Mayor said he had always enjoyed walking and was delighted to welcome visitors to Godalming, an ancient town, surrounded by good walking country.

2 David Rose – “Surrey Villages. Then and Now”

David Rose, a local historian, journalist and photographer, gave a fascinating presentation using many old picture postcards, comparing the village scenes shown on the cards with present day photographs. A number of the older members rather preferred the past!

3 Surrey Area Chair Speech

Holly Matthews thanked all attendees for coming to the AGM and all those who had organised the pre-AGM walks.

Holly said she was standing down after her 5 years in post. She had joined the Ramblers 16 years ago and Surrey now had 16 Groups! She especially thanked the Leedhams for helping her in her post and Brian Reader for his unrivalled knowledge of Ramblers' matters.

4 Minutes of the AGM held on 4th February 2023

These had been placed on the Area Website. The minutes were approved.

5 Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending September 30th 2023

These had been placed on the Area website. No questions were received or comments made. Both the Annual Report and the Accounts were approved by the meeting.

6 Election of Officers

The following were elected:

Area President	Brian Reader
Area Chair	Vacant
Area Vice-Chair	Elliott Cairnes
Area Secretary	Nick Bragger
Area Treasurer	Ka Yiu Lau
Area Membership Secretary	Colin Venton
Area Footpath/Access Officer	Andrew Bowden
Area Publicity Officer	David Cooper
Area Webmaster	Deb Skinner
Area Minutes Secretary	Keith Chesterton

Keith Chesterton said Holly had been Chair, while holding down a full-time job as well as doing the work of the Secretary for over a year

He said surely there was someone, possibly retired, with more time than Holly had had, who would be prepared to take on the role. If not now, perhaps after reflection, someone would put their name forward to find out more details.

**Action
All**

- 7 Guest Speaker – Vanessa Slawson, SE Regional Engagement Officer**
Vanessa said the Ramblers had a collective success last year. They had increased the public profile of the Ramblers, and had received more publicity. They had had 150 stories about the Right to Roam. They had new content on the website and diversified the sources of funding.
In response to a question, Vanessa said we should use coming elections to campaign, including to extend the right to roam, include access in the new farm payments scheme and expand green routes.
One member commented that The Ramblers should take bolder action to increase younger members, with lower fees for young walkers.
- 8 Appointment of Representatives to the Ramblers National council**
Nick Bragger and Elliot Cairnes volunteered to be representatives. This was agreed
- 9 Membership Cup Award**
For the 2nd successive year, Surrey Heath won the Membership Cup, awarded to the group with the largest numerical increase in numbers for the previous year. Gordon Shefford accepted on behalf of the Group
- 10 Thanks**
Holly thanked all the members of Godalming and Haslemere Group who had organised the AGM, arranged the hall, and provided excellent refreshments. At the end of the meeting, members present applauded Holly Matthews for her 5 years of service as Chair of Surrey Area.
- 11 Attendance and Apologies**
There were 142 attenders at the AGM, 139 Surrey members and 3 guests. 15 Groups had representatives with 56 from Godalming and Haslemere. There were apologies from East Surrey Walkers, and individual apologies had been received from Brian Reader, Fiona Spencer, Clive Edwards, Barbara Bulman and Deb Skinner.

BKC 8/2/24

