

Surrey Area AGM

Minutes of Meeting held at the East Horsley Village Hall on Saturday 1st February 2025 at 2 pm

1 **Welcome and Introduction**

Barbara Crow, Chair of Kingston Ramblers welcomed members and introduced Gordon Elsdon, the guest speaker.

2 **Gordon Elsdon – Tales of the Riverbank**

He spoke of the geological history of the Thames, which originally joined the sea in East Anglia before it changed to its current course.

3 **Surrey Area (Acting) Chair Speech**

Elliot Cairnes thanked Gordon Elsdon for his talk and Barbara Crow and the Kingston group for organising the AGM, leading the walks and providing the refreshments.

He also thanked all present for attending

Elliot said he had hoped that someone would volunteer to be Chair, but he had been Vice-Chair and Acting Chair for the year.

He said there had been steady progress by the Area with an increase in the number of walks led and a small increase in membership numbers.

4 **Minutes of the AGM held on 3rd February 2024**

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

5 **Matters arising from the Minutes**

The vacancy for Chair had not been filled in the previous year

6 **Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending September 30th 2024**

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.

7 **Election of Officers**

The following were elected:

Area President **Brian Reader**

Area Chair **Elliot Cairnes**

Area Vice-Chair Vacant

Area Secretary **Nick Bragger**

Area Treasurer **Ka Yiu Lau**

Area Membership Secretary Vacant

Area Footpath/Access Officer **Andrew Bowden**

Area Publicity Officer none but **David Cooper** offered informal help

Post meeting Nick Bragger agreed to cover membership and SE Walker liaison

Area Webmaster none but **Deb Skinner** agreed to continue as a volunteer

Area Minutes Secretary **Keith Chesterton**

It was hoped there would be volunteers for the vacant positions of Vice Chair, Area Membership Secretary, Area Publicity Office, Area Webmaster. The Chair requested Volunteers **ALL**

8 Election of Independent Examiner of Accounts

Keith Chesterton was elected

9 Election of Independent Members of the Council

There was provision for up to 5 members of the Council representing individual members. Keith Chesterton, David Cooper and Deb Skinner were elected.

10 Guest Speaker from Ramblers' - Lucy Robinson, Chair of Trustees

Lucy said the trustees were in the middle of a review of governance. They wanted to help more members become volunteers, reduce the inequalities in access to the countryside and reduce bureaucracy.

She said the current organisation of the national AGM did not encourage working together and swapping ideas.

There were a number of questions and comments from attendees.

"Could we restore expertise on footpath matters at HO?"

"We should place more emphasis on the health benefits of walking"

"What do we do about safeguarding"

"Is there any evidence that the walk leaders training was putting off leaders".

The response was that there was no such evidence.

11 Appointment of Representatives to the Ramblers National council

Elliot Cairnes, Barbara Crow and Nick Bragger (subsequently not available – hence 1 vacancy) were agreed to be Surrey's representatives.

All

12 Membership Cup Award

This was awarded to Woking Group.

13 Thanks

Elliot again thanked the members of Kingston Group who had organised the AGM, led several walks and provided excellent refreshments.

He also asked members to fill in the Rights of Way improvement Plan questionnaire

14 Attendance and Apologies

There were 82 attenders at the AGM - 79 Surrey members and 3 guests.

14 Groups had representatives with 28 from Kingston.

There were 10 apologies including from Nick Bragger and Andrew Bowden.

BKC 27/2/25