

HARROGATE RAMBLING CLUB

Minutes of the 89th Annual General Meeting held on 16th October 2025

1. Obituaries

The following had been drawn to the attention of the meeting:
John Footman, John Bright.

2. Apologies for Absence

61 members attended the meeting and apologies for absence were received from , Jan Mason, Sue and Harry Tabiner, Cheryl Johnston, Nick Kemp, Ros Kemp, Jean Chapman, Mick Leach, Deborah Waind, Alison Young.

3. Approval of the Minutes of 88th AGM (17.10.2024)

The minutes were approved.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Annual Reports

5a General Secretary

John Hopkins reported there had been one incident in the past year, when Peter Knowles had tripped on a kerb and damaged his head and had been taken to hospital by other HRC members on the walk. The rest of the group handled the situation well, and Peter recovered a few days later.

Events which had taken place included socials at Starling bar organised by Stan Robertson, which had generally been well supported and enjoyed by those attending. A successful coach ramble to Kirby Stephen was the idea of Laura, organised by Sue Riley and Jean Chapman, and led by a number of walk leaders to whom thanks were made.

Attention was drawn to the guidance on walks safety on the website and in the booklets. This was helpful and well thought out and was important to observe. Hi Viz jackets are available from the secretary.

5b Programme Secretary

Jonathan Marriott reported that during the past year the club has offered around 280 different walks over 5 walk levels including a Coach Ramble to the Upper Eden Valley. A full coach of almost 50 covering 5 different groups enjoyed a good day's walking before partaking of some excellent fayre at The Bay Horse in Winton. Thanks are due to Laura for identifying the area and the superb hostelry, then to our president Sue for taking over the reins together with Jean Chapman whose meticulous work ensured we all got what we wanted to eat. Everyone agreed that the day was a great success.

I reported last year that the Sunday C/D group was struggling for leaders and unfortunately this trend has not improved, indeed only 4 walks have been offered in the last 12 months, and none in the forthcoming programme. We continue to have strong support for the Wednesday C and D groups, so this trend is a little baffling. I will finish with a couple of thanks, firstly to the amazing group of walk collectors without whose efforts we would have far more gaps in the programme, which contrary to popular belief does not fill itself. I know how much cajoling, arm twisting

and bribing goes on to get the slots filled, so many thanks to Mark, Ann, Alison, Jean & Peter.

Secondly to Anne Hopkins who has provided me with photos for the cover of Programme booklets, the April – July booklet was courtesy of Anne and one of her wintry scenes will grace the cover of our next programme. All contributions welcome. please email them to me, portrait only please.

5c Membership Secretary

Andy Wills reported that the membership at 1 September 2025 stands at 279 which includes 14 honorary members. This compares with a membership on 1 September 2024 as reported at the last AGM, of 289.

There have been 25 new members joining in the year to 1 Sept 25, an average of just over two per month which I feel is encouraging (the equivalent number in the previous year was 19).

Since the year end on 1 Sept 25 there have been a further four new members join. The fall in overall membership is accounted for by 35 departures. Of these 27 are from notified resignations at the time of membership renewal, two known deaths and six previous members who haven't responded to emails, texts or made payment and thus removed from membership.

The source of new members this year as notified on the joining form is 11 new members from referrals by another member, 11 from internet search, two are re-joiners and one from a referral by the Ramblers Association. Thank you to those members who have made recommendations for others to join our club – you are our best source of new people.

The current location of members by address shows that 77% live in Harrogate, Knaresborough and surrounding villages. There are 10% of members who live in Wetherby or in Ilkley & Otley, 3% in Ripon or Pateley Bridge and the balance in York, Leeds, Skipton or Boroughbridge. There are six paid-up members who live out of area – Scarborough, Milton Keynes, Letchworth, Birmingham, Perth and in Devon. The largest task as membership secretary this year has not been in welcoming new members, which is always a pleasure – they receive a pack containing the latest programme, the emergency pack, a welcome letter and a pencil – but in chasing members for payment of the annual subscription. About three quarters of members have a standing order or pay by bank transfer in February or March. However, the other quarter of the membership have needed to be chased, some more than once and some three times. Please can I ask members that don't have a standing order set up for their £10, that they consider doing so; just email me for bank details.

5d Administrator

Sue Marriott said there was not a lot to report. Lots of emails have been sent out, predominantly covering walk changes and social events. Sue would be happy to take account of feedback and any other comments people might have. Those present expressed their thanks to Sue for the time she spent on the task, producing such helpful and positive information to members.

5e Webmaster

Julia Riddington reported the following:

1. Nothing much to report as regards the website. It has been performing well since we moved to our new supplier.
2. We've upgraded the email service we use to enable Sue to more easily send out the emails to members.

3. The walks archive will be updated at some point over winter with any new walks from 2025.
4. We've had 30 enquiries via the website over the past year. Half regarding the possibility of joining the club. The rest are mainly queries from current members and a few from speculative third parties.
5. Big thank you to Jonathan and Sue for taking on updating the website content. Leaves me free to concentrate on structural changes and the backend software.

6. Annual Accounts for year ended 31st August 2023

6a Treasurer

David Bonsels reported that the club is in a sound financial position. The balance of funds had increased by £541 over the year to £7851. Income (principally subs) was very similar. Expenditure overall was down (last year included the donation for the Gunnerside boardwalk). The coach ramble nearly broke even.

6b Approval of Accounts

The Approval of the accounts was proposed, seconded and agreed by the meeting

6c Appointment of Honorary Auditor

Linda Wilson had kindly audited the accounts and has agreed to do so next year.

7. President's Address

I'd like to start by welcoming you all here this evening; it's great to see so many of you. I'd also like to thank Stan for seeing to all of the arrangements yet again.

This may come as a disappointment to some of you, but I'm not going to attempt to emulate my predecessor's mode of address at last year's AGM; ie my address will not be in verse.

My year as President has flown by. For this smooth ride I have to thank the committee; they have provided help and support throughout the year and I couldn't have managed without them. Each and every one has fulfilled their role quietly and efficiently. There is a large amount of work needed to keep a club of this size functioning smoothly, which is not always apparent to all of the members.

John does a huge amount of work as General Secretary and he has played a major role in steering me through my first year. Thank you.

Dave keeps us on the straight and narrow financially and Andy very efficiently processes membership enquiries, renewals etc. He took over this role a year ago and has taken to it like a duck to water.

Producing the walks programme is a major task, performed very efficiently by Jonathan. I also need to thank the walks collectors and walk leaders at this point-without them the walks program would be a very slim document!

Sue, with great patience, keeps us updated with the ever increasing number of changes to walks details etc, and Julia continues to manage the website; this is a professional role undertaken by a volunteer and we are extremely lucky to have Julia's expertise. We are making some progress towards finding a backup for Julia but this is not finalised as yet. Jonathan and Sue are helping to lighten Julia's load by uploading walks information onto the website.

One thing that I'm pleased has happened this year is that we now have representatives from all of the walking groups on the committee: I think this is important and hopefully ensures that the committee is aware of all of the groups' concerns.

Part of Stan's contribution is organising various social events, such as the successful Starling Bar evenings. Obviously the primary function of the club is to arrange walks,

but social events are also important. These are the main opportunities for members to meet others outside of their regular walking groups. If Stan ever leaves the club I think a large percentage of the social events will cease to exist!

Laura keeps the committee in the 21st century with the club Instagram account.

Paul offered to represent the D group and instantly stepped up, volunteering to lead a walk on the coach ramble very soon after joining the committee.

A recent innovation has been the Walks Archive. This enables members to search for walks according to grade, length, area etc. It's a very useful tool for walks leaders and I urge you all to make use of it. I have personally used it a couple of times already.

I have had the pleasure of walking with all of the walking groups during the year; I really enjoyed the experience and, if re-elected for another year, will repeat the exercise. Although I have to admit that the definition of "walking with the group" was rather stretched in relation to the A group!

We are all very sorry to be losing David Riley from the committee; he's been an active member of the club and committee for many years, providing HRC reports to the local papers as well as organising several coach rambles. I'd like to thank him for all his work over the years. However, the good news is that we are not losing his contribution immediately; he has already offered to co-organise a summer social for 2026. This will be in celebration of the club's 90th anniversary - the club was founded in 1936 and has offered walks every year since then, including throughout the Second World War. This is a huge achievement made possible by a succession of walks leaders and members over the years. More details of the celebrations will follow.

Finally, someone who has been with the club for many years (although not the total 90 years!) is Lynne Noble. She has been an active member of the club for 60 years; this feat is unlikely to be repeated as people do not join walking clubs at an early age nowadays. Neither do they tend to live in one area for all of their walking lives. I must thank Lynne for the detailed and interesting summary of the club's history that she prepared for inclusion in the last walks programme.

To commemorate this unique achievement, on behalf of HRC I'd like to present Lynne with a gift to mark the occasion and wish her many more years walking with the club.

Lynne thanked the club for the photograph and to Katrina Brayshaw for taking it. She said how important the club had been to her so for many years.

8. Election of President, Officers and Committee Members

All ten posts on the committee become vacant at each AGM. There is no limit to the length of time that a committee member can serve, other than the president who can only serve for three years. The year of first election to the role is in brackets. Nominations received are as follows:-

Post	Current incumbent	Nominations
President	Sue Riley (2024)	Sue Riley Proposed by David Riley Seconded by Jonathan Marriott
General Secretary	John Hopkins (2021)	John Hopkins Proposed by Andy Wills Seconded by Laura Buckley
Treasurer	David Bonsels (2022)	David Bonsels Proposed by Sue Riley Seconded by David Riley
Programme	Jonathan Marriott (2023)	Jonathan Marriott

Secretary		Proposed by David Riley Seconded by David Bonsels
Membership Secretary	Andy Wills (2024)	Andy Wills Proposed by Laura Buckley Seconded by David Bonsels
Administrator	Sue Marriott (2022)	Sue Marriottt Proposed by David Riley Seconded by Sue Riley
Committee Members	Laura Buckley (2023)	Laura Buckley Proposed by David Bonsels Seconded by Sue Riley
	Stan Robertson (2017)	Stan Robertson Proposed by Jonathan Marriott Seconded by Sue Marriott
	Paul Dickinson (2024)	Paul Dickinson Proposed by Jonathan Marriott Seconded by David Riley

There being no other nominations, it was proposed seconded and agreed by the members present that these members were duly elected

The webmaster is a non-elected post and is appointed by the committee and is invited to all committee meetings.

Webmaster

Julia Riddington

9. Any Other Business

None

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Signed

Date.....