

**Minutes of the Walk for Health – Telford and Wrekin 7th Annual General Meeting  
held on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 at Meeting Point House**

	Title	Minutes
1	Persons present	Naomi Wrighton, chair, welcomed everyone. 18 people attended: Sue Bogue, Dave Cooke, Sandra Cooke, Mary Donaldson, Diana Dummett, Jean Escott, Jackie Fowler, Clive Godfrey, Sid Harris, Chas Kay, Chris Jay, Ken Mayor, Veronica Minchin, Carol Round, Steve Shaw, Diane Skelton and Malcolm Skelton.
2	Apologies received	Eve Clevenger, Alexis Falconer, Chas Grewal, Derek Houghton, Terry Jones, Rita Mackreil, June Mellish, Steve Reynolds, Dag Saunders, Margaret Snell and Laura Thorogood.
3	Minutes of 2021 AGM	Naomi Wrighton took everyone through the 2021 AGM minutes, which were accepted and signed. No matters arising.
4	Chair's report	Naomi Wrighton gave her report, which is attached as Appendix 1.
5	Alf Clews Shield	Naomi announced that the shield will be awarded to Terry Jones. She said that Terry has been walking with the Walking for Health group in Leegomery for many years. After a little bit of persuasion, Terry became a walk leader and has been leading walks for at least 5 years. Because of his support for walking, he has encouraged other walk leaders and the walk numbers have increased in Leegomery. There are now two walks on a Monday from the post box.
6	New walk leaders	Congratulations were given to three new walk leaders who have their gained certificates this year: Ken Mayor, Reg Price and June Slater. Carol Round presented Ken with his certificate today.
7	Co-ordinator's report	Carol Round gave her report, which is attached as Appendix 2.
8	Treasurer's report	Mary Donaldson gave her report, which is attached as Appendix 3. Our new account was opened in August with Lloyds bank. Mary expressed our thanks to Forum 50+ for their grant of £2,500. Our current subscription with Ramblers has been extended again, until March 2023. The accounts were accepted.
9	Committee resolution	A paper was circulated with the agenda and is attached as Appendix 4. Resolution: <i>"By a majority of 7:2 the committee voted to propose this resolution: The committee proposes that Walking for Health Telford and Wrekin continues to run as a partner of Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, as we believe the benefits outweigh the potential disadvantages."</i>

		<p>Chas Kay, who led the working group, stated today that he would no longer support this recommendation because he now understands that, should the occasion arise that a walk leader/s was sued, they would not be covered under Ramblers' insurance.</p> <p>Chas also mentioned that he knew of another group that is run by volunteers.</p> <p>Jean Escott stated that the committee made their decision on the information available to them at the time. In particular, she said that it was understood by the working party and then by the committee that, if we needed good legal representation, we would be safer to stay with the Ramblers to avoid committee members being personally held responsible.</p> <p>Steve Shaw spoke about the internal processes that would take place prior to reaching litigation: if people comply with policies and procedures, they will be supported by the organisation, whether under Ramblers or not.</p> <p>Sue Bogue said that walkers understand that they walk at their own risk.</p> <p>The resolution was proposed by Naomi Wrighton and seconded by Jean Escott. A vote was taken today: 8 for; 5 against; 4 abstentions. The resolution was passed.</p> <p>Steve Shaw proposed that the decision should be reviewed annually at the AGM. This was seconded by several people and vote taken. Agreed by a considerable majority.</p>
10	Election of committee	<p>Seven members of last year's committee stood for re-election: Mary Donaldson, Jean Escott, Jackie Fowler, Sid Harris, Chris Jay, Carol Round and Naomi Wrighton. All were nominated by Malcolm Skelton and seconded by Dave Cooke. All were elected by a clear majority.</p> <p>Further nominations were invited prior to the AGM and at the meeting but none were forthcoming.</p>
11	Any other business	<p>Chris Jay spoke about <u>risk assessments</u> for walks. She took the meeting through a sample completed assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each walk (e.g. ASDA, Wellington, Shawbirch) only requires one assessment to cover all the walks covered in that group. Any children on a walk must be under the care of their responsible adult (and not the walk leader).</li> <li>• Chris offered help to any walk leaders with completing risk assessment, on request.</li> </ul> <p>The Ramblers form is generic and can be tailored to include specific matters relating to each walk.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed forms should be returned to Carol Round. Assessments should be updated annually or whenever things change.</li></ul> <p>We will talk to DENSO about access to their land to lead a <u>walk during cherry blossom time</u>.</p> <p>Malcom Skelton said that Wellington Walkers are Welcome was approached by Paul Shuttleworth of Radio Shropshire about an event to support Children in Need. "<u>Wellington Welly Walk</u>" has been organised at Dothill local nature reserve: 10am on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> November, starting by Dothill Primary School.</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the <u>quiz</u> was deferred until next year.</p>
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**Attached overleaf:**

- Appendix 1 Chair's report
- Appendix 2 Co-ordinator's report
- Appendix 3 Treasurer's report
- Appendix 4 Resolution by committee

Signed:

Chair

Secretary

## APPENDIX 1 Chair's Report

- This has been a challenging year. After delays, Ramblers Wellbeing Walks was finally launched on January 19th. We feel they have changed their stance on several items during the transition which hasn't been helpful. Fortunately, their changes of mind have generally been in the right direction. The committee have been working behind the scenes, meeting on Zoom throughout the year. Thanks to the Quakers for continuing to allow us to use their Zoom room.
- Lynne, our co-ordinator until August, when she resigned for personal reason, worked tirelessly, dealing with the transition (which wasn't straightforward as the systems were far from ready) and delivering training. She also coped with shortages of leaders and other problems. Chas helped her with setting up our entry on the national site. At the beginning, the national site was not good, the fault being national not local, it is better, even attractive, now but the walk registration side is still unusable. Thank you, Lynne and Chas for all you have done over the past 5 years.
- Jackie, our secretary is remarkable, in that she does this from pure altruism, not being either a walker or a leader in our scheme. She is incredibly efficient, and also wise.
- Mary has continued to keep our accounts impeccably. She had to deal with changing the bank account to Lloyds, as Nationwide discontinued the Treasurer's Trust account that we have used since the beginning.
- Chris Jay qualified as a trainer during the year. We are grateful to her for taking this on. Chris has also taken on the Twitter account and makes most of the posts on the Facebook account. We have definitely had new walkers as the direct result of her posts.
- Steve and Veronica, both of whom have decided to step down from the committee, have been active in our committee meetings. Steve continued to be our point of contact with **DENSO Manufacturing UK**, who have again supported us. Steve has been a committee member since we were first formed and was our chair for several years. Those with long memories may remember that he volunteered to help with coordination at that first meeting. Most of us didn't know him then, as he was working and couldn't attend the walk leaders' events that the Heritage Lottery had funded. Both Steve and Veronica are continuing as valued walk leaders. Thank you to both of them.

The new committee members we recruited at the last AGM have made their mark already

- Carol took on the job of interim coordinator when Lynne resigned and has settled into the role very quickly.
- Jean picked up the publicity function which is her metier. You made have heard her on Radio Shropshire before the Get Telford Walking event. She is also going to be our quiz master.
- Sid represents us on the Madeley Bench Walks project, is an excellent proof reader, and has a useful different perspective due to his role working for T&W Council.
- We are always looking for new people to help on the committee, you don't need to take on a specific role.
- Thank you too to the working party.

- We have reluctantly removed the Town Park walks from the programme as they were not well supported. Although not entirely removed, we have put red warnings on the programme that the Madeley Wednesday afternoon walk is probably not running. The Bowring Park walk decided to go independent.
- On the plus side we have been approached about adding a projected new walk from Hollinswood to our programme.
- There is still an aim to expand the Thursday afternoon South/Central Telford offering to Lightmoor; Lawley; Dawley (as now) and possibly Telford Town Park on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Thursdays.
- We really do need new walk leaders.
- We are looking forward to Telford Walking Festival from May 29th to June 4th, expressions of interest in leading, particularly on Saturday June 3rd, would be very welcome.

Finally, thanks to our one time walk leader and committee member Bob for setting the quiz for us.

*Naomi Wrighton, Chair*

## APPENDIX 2 Coordinator's Report

My first year on the committee has flown by. Since taking over as coordinator in the summer I have been familiarising myself with the Ramblers systems and functions. I have also been updating the walk leader listings on Assemble. We currently have 66 leaders registered with Ramblers. Only 29 of these lead on our existing walks, the remainder leading on closed walks or not at all. We are trying to recruit more leaders. Our new Development Officer at Ramblers has been very helpful and acknowledges that things weren't great to start with but are being improved all the time. Here's to the next twelve months.

*Carol Round, Coordinator*

## APPENDIX 3 Treasurer's Report

Walking for Health - Telford and Wrekin				Annual General Meeting				3 November 2022			
<b>Receipts</b>				<b>Payments</b>							
Interest		30-Jun-21	0.85	2 Engraved Pen & Pencil Gift Sets		17-Nov-21	13.98				
Forum 50+		16-Dec-21	2500.00	Co-ordinator's Expenses		17-Nov-21	86.40				
Interest		31-Dec-21	0.80	Meeting Point Trust Ltd		17-Nov-21	221.29				
Interest		30-Jun-22	1.66	Forum 50+ - Freepost Licence, etc		17-Nov-21	79.46				
Interest		18-Jul-22	0.21	N W Print Ltd		20-Jan-22	170.00				
				The Wakes		17-Mar-22	62.50				
				N W Print Ltd		17-May-22	128.00				
				Forum 50+ - Freepost Licence, etc		25-May-22	68.37				
				N W Print Ltd		15-Oct-22	155.00				
				Training Expenses		15-Oct-22	10.20				
			<b>£2,503.52</b>				<b>£995.20</b>				
<b>Balance b/fwd 8 Nov 2021</b>		<b>1484.06</b>									
Net Receipts		1508.32									
<b>Balance as at 3 Nov 2022</b>		<b>£2,992.38</b>									
<b>Lloyds Treasurer's Account</b>		<b>£2,992.38</b>									
(18 Aug 2022 - New account opened with Lloyds Bank)											

*Mary Donaldson, Treasurer*

## **APPENDIX 4 Committee Resolution for the AGM**

### **By a majority of 7:2 the committee voted to propose this resolution:**

The committee proposes that Walking for Health Telford and Wrekin continues to run as a partner of Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, as we believe the benefits outweigh the potential disadvantages.

### **Background**

In December 2020 Ramblers announced, without any consultation, that they were changing the Walking for Health Scheme and re-naming the scheme Ramblers Wellbeing Walks. The new scheme required all local groups to pay £1000 per annum (reduced by £250 for each of the first two years) to Ramblers to cover insurances, publicity, training and other general support.

After some discussion at a General Meeting on 24th February 2021, it was resolved to remain with Ramblers for a limited period and ask a small working party to consider the implications of two options:

1. To accept the changes proposed by Ramblers
2. To leave Ramblers and to become "independent"

The working party unanimously recommended to the committee that we should remain with Ramblers Wellbeing Walks.

### **Rationale**

#### **Benefits**

Leader Training, Risk Assessments, Incident reporting and Policies (Safeguarding, GDPR, Equality and Diversity, Bullying and Harassment, Photographs etc)

The Ramblers have forms and policies in place, it would need considerable work to develop our own. We do not have this capacity at present.

Walker Registration, Registers and data entry

The Ramblers have removed the need for this, making it optional. It is possible that, were we to go it alone, we would need to take registers for insurance purposes. (Registers are useful for learning names, but there are other ways to do this.)

Brand and Recognition

Being part of a national body gives us added credence locally . The national website signposts potential walkers to us and to our walks.

Support of a National body

Were we to go it alone, it is just possible that leaders and/or the committee could be sued in a way that is not covered by the insurance we could buy (for example, for bullying or harassment or discrimination). As part of the Ramblers, this would be covered under their insurance.

#### **Potential Disadvantages**

Publicity

Oher than the national website, there is no publicity generated for us. It is still up to us to produce our leaflets, maintain our website, our Facebook page and our Twitter presence.

Value for Money

The cost of Insurance to cover liabilities to the same value as that provided by Ramblers would be easily sourced and cost in the region of £200 in total

The fee seems very steep for a purely voluntary group. (Although the light touch approach to registers will go some way to reducing our running costs.)  
(Annual running costs will be approximately £2,000 pa made up of £1,000 to Ramblers & £1,000 to cover our average annual costs based on pre-covid official accounts. **The committee are confident they can raise these funds sustainably in future years.**)

#### Lack of Confidence

Admittedly against the background of Covid, Ramblers time scales, and, we think, intentions, have slipped repeatedly. Their personnel often changes. Although adequate now, the website was released in a poor state.

#### **What are other groups doing?**

Shropshire Council has joined the scheme, but with a reduced number of walks. See <http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/walking/walking-for-health/> It is possible that some of the walks they used to run (e.g. Upton Maga, Shrewsbury, Much Wenlock are continuing informally) .

There are many other Ramblers Wellbeing Walks schemes in the West Midlands.

The only independent schemes we could find are run by councils, not by volunteers.