



Bury

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2023-24
Held at Old White Lion Public House, Bury on December 10th 2024

Present: Caroline Knights, Jim Byrom, Simon Holder, Ed Husband

Apologies: Malcolm Chester, Stewart Brady, Edgar Ernstbrunner.

1. Minutes of Previous AGM 12th December 2023

Accepted as correct

2. Matters Arising from Previous AGM

None

3. Reports

Reports were delivered from the Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Walk Organiser & Webmaster and Footpath Officer (received via email).

3a) Chairman's Report (Ed Husband)

Accidents and Incidents - None Reported.

3b) Treasurer's Report (Jim Byrom)

General Account

Opening balance (01/10/23)	£791.16	
Closing balance (30/09/24)	£854.12	
Increase in balance	£ 62.96	
Expenditure :		
Recces	£79.80	
Stamps	£240.00	
Total		£319.80
Receipts :		
Rambblers HO	£272.76	
RWH Travel	£110.00	
Total		£382.76

Coach Account

Opening balance (01/10/23)	£982.10
Closing balance (30/09/24)	£982.10

3c) Secretary's Report (Simon Holder)

Membership Numbers

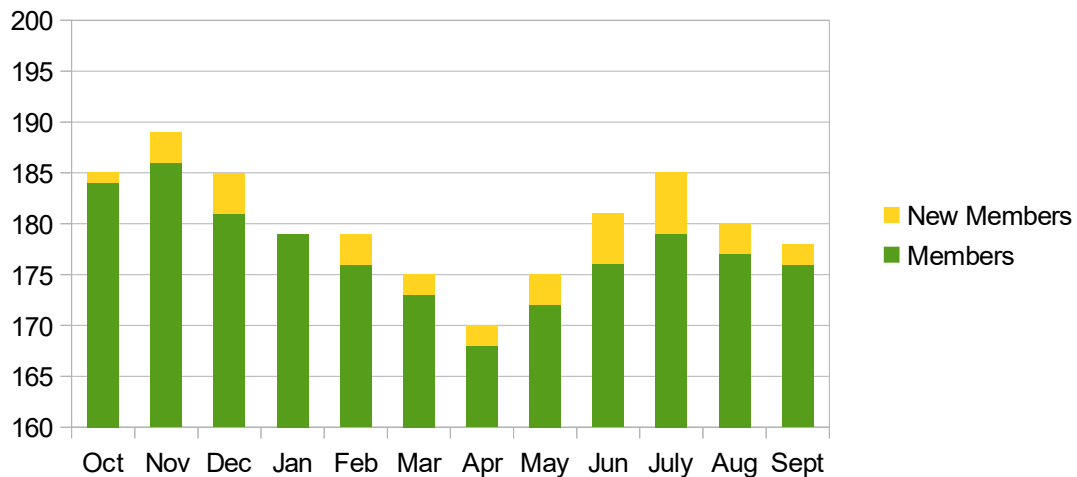
1st October 2023: 184 members, 1 payment pending and 1 affiliate member

1st October 2024: 176 members, 4 payment pending, 2 new members, 5 affiliates.

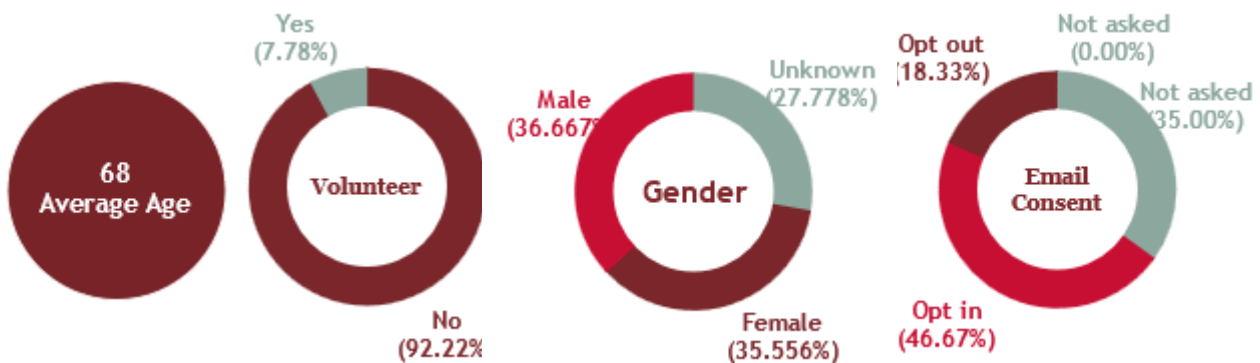
We have had 34 new members, 42 members have either resigned, not renewed their membership or moved away.

Membership Figures Report 2023-4

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept
Members	184	186	181	179	176	173	168	172	176	179	177	176
New Members	1	3	4		3	2	2	3	5	6	3	2



Analysis of membership as at 30/09/24



3d) Walks Organiser's Report (Malcolm Chester)

Bury Ramblers organised 37 Sunday walks in 2024 out of 52 weeks available for walks.

Statistics:

- 37 Sunday walks were organised and attended by 6 min to 18 max walkers with an average of 10 people per walk.
- Most walks were between 10 and 12 miles in length and graded as Moderate.
The shortest walk was 6.5 miles and graded as Leisurely. One walk was 12 miles and graded as Strenuous and 3 walks were graded as Moderate/Strenuous.
- 1 Sunday Walk was cancelled due adverse to weather conditions.
- A total of 10 walk leaders submitted one or more walks.
- No Wednesday Evening walks were organised.
- No Coach trips were organised due a lack of a Coach Organiser.

We continued to use a rolling walks programme, which was displayed on the website. As there were not enough walks to compile a full programme of walks, a paper programme was not issued.

Written Risk Assessments are now not required to be done but new leaders are required to complete

the online training courses. Existing leaders are also encouraged to complete online training courses.

There was no organised meet-up point for car sharing. Groups meet at the walk start point. Only the walk start-point and start-time were published.

Thanks to all the walk leaders who contributed to the walks programme.

3e) Webmaster's Report (Malcolm Chester)

Bury Ramblers website is based on a Joomla content management system (CMS) platform hosted and run by Ramblers-Webs. The latest version has recently been updated to Joomla 5.

There have been no problems running the current version and it has continued to be used to display future walk programmes using Ramblers Walks Manager to 'pull through' the walk programme details from the Ramblers national website.

Walk reports for each walk continue to be submitted together with photographs supplied by members and displayed in the photo gallery. The archives now contain several thousand photographs and reports spanning 15 years.

Walk leaders continue to submit walks using the link to Google Forms on The Bury Ramblers website and it has worked well. Leaders can submit walks using a computer, tablet or mobile phone.

3f) Bury FP Report 2024 (Edgar Ernstbrunner)

Local Access Forum

Still happening three times a year (February, June, October), also serving as a Rights of Way Forum. That means that in addition to normal strategic LAF issues we also discuss specific PROW affairs such as preconsultations on particular path proposals, and of course the list of works carried out over each four-month period preceding each LAF meeting. There's a steady, if unspectacular, flow of path improvements (not worth re-reporting here – see regular FP reports to EC meetings) within the Authority's rather limited means.

Path orders so far this year

None confirmed, although the proposed diversion of 19RAM (W end) is close, the landowner having carried out the work implementing modifications required to address initial objections.

Assistance with Rights of Way funding: No current proposals

Now for the rather too many serious continuing issues:

The promised Irwell footbridge

Last year's report stated we'd been told that funding of more than £2m had been signed off from the GM Bee Network for a bridge replacement across the Irwell, carrying a footpath (8 St Mary's, Radcliffe). The work was expected to be completed by September 2024. When we asked about progress at the October 2024 (!) LAF we got the scarcely credible reply that "due to inflation the cost had almost doubled" and that additional funding was being sought. Meanwhile, of course, the work hasn't even started. Yet another indefinite postponement of a promised PROW development (and see below).

Consolidation of the Definitive Map and Statement

Something we bring up at every LAF meeting. This is 60 years overdue (40 years if we're charitable and use the former GMC maps of 1984/5, which were, however, largely based on the then 20-year old Lancashire CC map, the LCC Statements being unchanged from 60 or even 70 years ago and mostly pretty useless), and thus quite a massive undertaking that we've endeavoured to assist with our survey back in 2016-2018. But with existing resources, they say, it is simply not possible. They're not even producing LEMOs for all those old path orders

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs)

We do now receive notification of new TTROs and extensions of existing ones. But our request for a TTRO Register (as maintained, for example, by Stockport MBC) is still pending. Therefore we cannot tell

whether we are notified of all such orders.
The problem of indefinitely extendable TTROs as such also remains.

The enduring case of FP Tottington 19

See previous reports for this path's long history. Developments since then:

- a) The Council's "Action Plan" wasn't followed through, and ultimately they declined to make a S.26 Compulsory Creation Order, stating that they'd decided to restore the path on its original line after all, "by the end of the summer". But nothing was actually happening.
- b) Therefore S.56 Crown Court proceedings were started, with an initial Directional Hearing to discuss dates for the Hearing proper. Possible dates were late November or mid-January. Prior to that Directional Hearing we produced a set of witness statements.
- c) Interestingly, shortly afterwards work on the footpath did start, with major vegetation clearance. This revealed that in fact the "collapsed culvert" merely amounted to two holes, one about 4m by 2m and the other one much smaller – hardly a reason to keep the path closed for (by now) 4 years.
- d) We now have a Crown Court hearing date (Manchester, Minshull Street) of 15 January.
- e) At the October LAF we were told that work was expected to be complete "within two weeks" (the end of which period coincides with this report's deadline). But so far, with (at the time of writing) a week to go, nothing further has happened. Verbal update to follow at the AGM.
- f) *** UPDATE *** Last week in October / first week in November the path was restored, with craters (culvert collapse) still present alongside, but fenced off. It beggars belief that this couldn't have been done years ago – and demonstrates that on occasion, legal action is the only way forward. As to that, the hearing is currently still on, but will presumably focus on awarding costs.

DMMO Processing

Again, no Orders were made last year. At previous LAFs we were told that a more efficient way of handling these had been identified. But we have yet to see any results
Quite a few of the DMMO applications are based on historical evidence. The Authority's excuse for not handling these, even after directed to make a decision (see below), is that they lack the necessary experience to assess historical evidence and are awaiting the outcome of the first such application – on which they are consistently failing to make a decision... Classic Catch 22.

"Directed Orders"

There has been no progress on this issue (an authority failing to decide on a path claim even after having been instructed by the SoS to do so – i.e. to accept or reject the claim). RACO have not, so far, been able to come up with an effective answer to this widespread problem.

*** UPDATE *** RA, together with OSS and BHS, are now considering taking this matter to the High Court for Judicial Review.

Summary

Whilst we have had a decent working relationship with ROW Officers, it cannot be denied that overall the negative aspects outweigh the positive ones at this stage. Certainly it would seem to be utter folly for BMBC to allow the 19TOT case actually to go to Court. Even if they did complete the job before the scheduled Crown Court hearing, they'd presumably be subject to some legal consequences (costs).

4. Election of Officers

Committee roles considered for re-election: Chair, Treasurer, Footpath Officer, Walks Organiser, Webmaster: Existing officers re-elected unopposed

Simon Holder resigned as Group Secretary and Membership Secretary

Caroline Knights stood for election for these roles together with the role of Minutes Secretary, which had been carried out by the Chair as an interim measure. Elected unopposed.

John Clements has agreed to continue in the role of independent examiner.

Caroline was welcomed to the committee by the Chairman and by all committee members. Chairman

thanked Simon for all of his work over several years for Bury Ramblers.

5. Any Other Business

Discussion on "ICE" Cards (IN CASE OF EMERGENCY) and whether we should make carrying of these mandatory. Also whether we should encourage or insist on the taking of a walk register, either manually (e.g. on paper) or using electronic recording. At the moment, this is left to walk leaders, but it is agreed that we need to be more rigorous and consistent. Caroline volunteered to take the walk register at each walk and check for ICE cards unless the walk leader wishes to do this.

AGM Closed 09:31pm