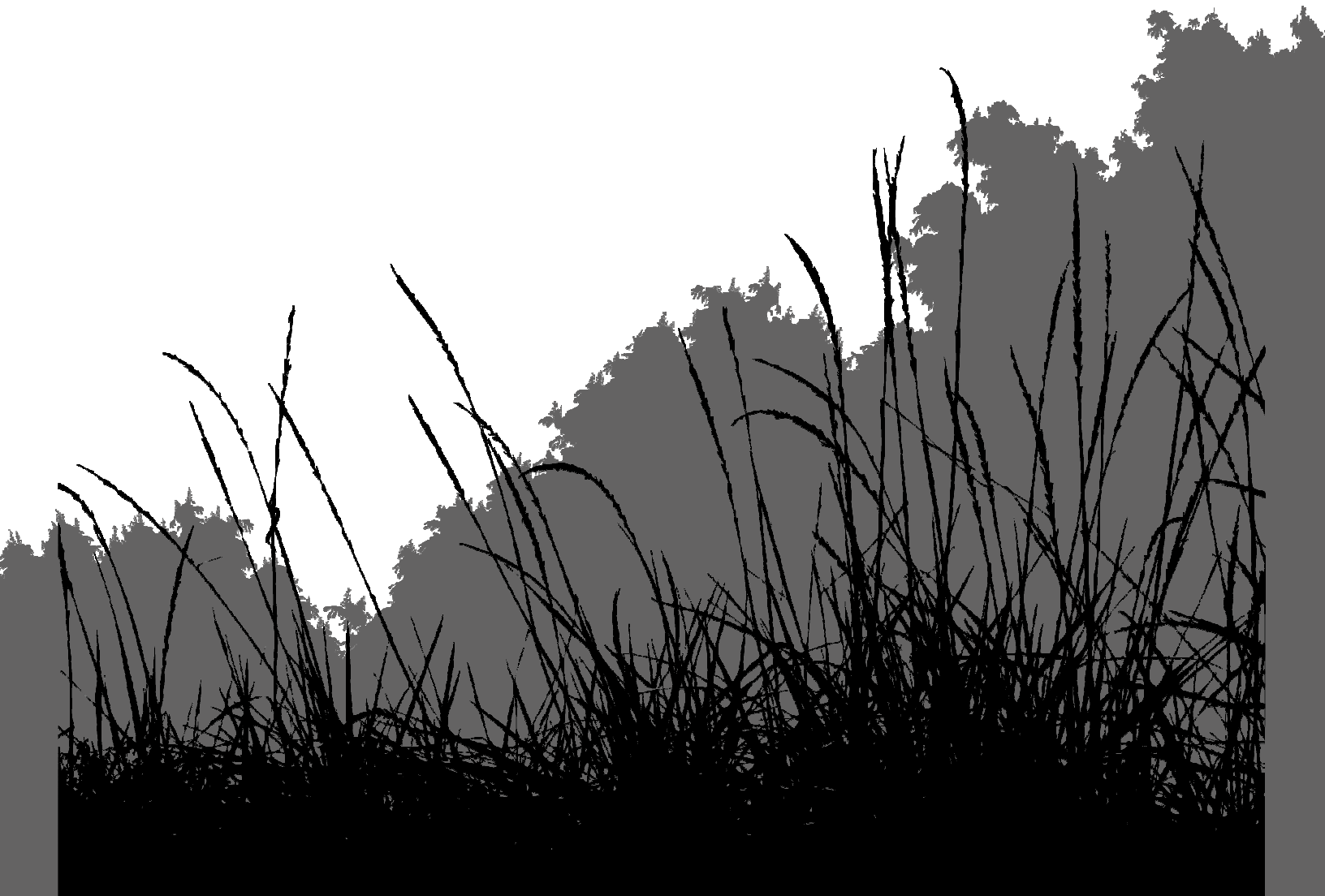




ramblers
at the heart of walking

Running a Ramblers Group

Induction for new Group Secretaries



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Contacting Ramblers staff

Throughout this booklet, references are made to various teams of paid staff who can provide further information or guidance. All teams listed are based in central office in London unless specified otherwise.

Central Office	Scotland Office	Wales Office
2 nd Floor 87-89 Albert Embankment London SE1 7TW T. 020 7339 8500 ramblers@ramblers.org.uk	Kingfisher House Auld Mart Business Park Milnathort Kinross KY13 9DA T. 01577 861222 scotland@ramblers.org.uk	3 Coopers Yard Curran Road Cardiff CF10 5NB T. 029 2064 4308 cerddwyr@ramblers.org.uk

For a complete, regularly updated list of all staff members, please visit:

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/password (and log in)

Introduction

The background

The Ramblers is more than a network of walking clubs. With almost 135,000 members, the Ramblers is Britain's biggest walking charity. We've been working for over 70 years to promote walking and to improve conditions for everyone who walks in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Ramblers was founded in 1935 when a number of large federations of rambling clubs (notably in Sheffield, Liverpool, London and Glasgow) came together.

The Ramblers has always relied on volunteers to get its work done. Indeed, the first paid member of staff was not appointed until the 1960s. Even now, over 10,000 volunteers out-number staff by well over 100 to 1! It is inconceivable to imagine how we would get our work done without the many campaigners, lobbyists, walk leaders, treasurers, co-ordinators and administrators who pepper the country through our network of Areas and Groups.

We have a strong tradition of campaigning for a better environment for all walkers and we've been instrumental in achieving many things that are often now taken for granted. We were a strong voice in the movement to establish national parks, and pioneering legislation like the "Right to Roam" and Land Reform Act are largely down to us.

The development of path networks - national trails, promoted routes and signposting are all results of our activity. In recent years, we have worked to encourage more people to get walking – particularly for its health benefits – and making walking accessible to all.

The role of Groups

Groups are fundamental to the way the Ramblers' gets things done. With over 470 across England, Scotland and Wales most members will have one nearby. The programmes of walks that Groups provide are, in themselves, a phenomenal volunteering effort which demonstrates the many benefits of walking to members and the public alike. The campaigning and practical work organised by so many Groups to improve our walking environment ensures that there are eyes and ears looking out for the interests of walkers nationwide.

It is this remarkable patchwork of activity, with its impressive history, that has won so many local successes for us. When knitted together it is this that gives our organisation a powerful voice.

The future

The Ramblers is focussed on the goal of achieving a Walking Britain, where walking is a popular choice for everyone, both for recreation and in daily life. Our new five year strategy, *Fresh Air, Firm Ground*, sets out exciting plans to build on our past successes.

Our strategy comprises four key aims:

Aim 1: Good quality walking environments

Aim 2: Making walking accessible to all

Aim 3: Communicating our work

Aim 4: A well run organisation

The first two aims are largely about looking outward; campaigning for a better walking environment and encouraging more people to walk. The next two aims are more inward-looking and are about us ensuring that our organisation is efficient, financially secure and communicates a positive image to the outside world.

This booklet has been set out under the headings of the strategy, to make it clear how your work is vital in delivering the strategy locally. As you will see, your role as Group Secretary mainly falls under the aim of a “Well run organisation”! Not surprising really, as your Group is an organisation in itself.

Ultimately though, we are one big organisation working for the same outcomes. All our Areas and Groups, our volunteers, campaigners, staff and trustees will play their part in delivering this strategy over the next few years. As a Group Secretary, along with other key volunteers, you will play an important role in managing the activities of your Group. We hope this booklet gives you an initial induction into your role and underlines how a thriving, successful local Group is so important to the Ramblers as a whole – indeed, to anyone who enjoys walking and even to those that haven’t started walking yet!

Tip!

As a new Group Secretary you will be gradually getting to know your fellow volunteers in your Group. Some of the information we touch on in this booklet is not solely your responsibility. To help you, we have flagged up some other volunteers who may take the lead on certain Group activities. **Look out for boxes like these:**

Walk Programme
Co-ordinator

Fresh Air – Aim 1: Good quality walking environments

People are more likely to walk, and to enjoy it more, if their walking environments are of the highest quality.

The first aim of the new strategy is largely about protecting our walking environment and campaigning to improve and expand access to it. The campaigners in your Group – Footpath, Access and Countryside Officers - will no doubt be involved in a number of local campaigns doing just this.

Footpath Officer
Access Officer
Countryside Officer

As Group Secretary you will sit on the committee, and while you will be involved in decisions about campaigns, campaigning is not specifically your area of responsibility. Therefore this booklet doesn't go into detail about the first strategic aim.

Fresh Air – Aim 2: Making Walking Accessible to all

We want to do much more to spread the positive message about walking, ensuring that those who do not currently walk very much have access to the pleasures which walking can bring.

1. Getting people walking

Encouraging people to get walking is one of our key strategic aims. Groups play a dominant role in making this happen through their walks programmes. An estimated 28,000 led walks are put on by Groups each year.

Walk Programme
Co-ordinator
Walk Leader

Printed walks programmes are the staple way of encouraging members to come walking with the group. Groups usually have a Walks Programme Coordinator or Walks Secretary who pulls the programme together on behalf of the Group. Over time, it can be the case that Groups develop a particular pattern of walks which suit those who regularly turn up. We strongly encourage Groups to develop a varied programme of walks to appeal to as many different people as possible. Walks using public transport, urban walks or short summer evening strolls are just some ideas that Groups have adopted with great success.

The more Groups can publicise details about the walks, the better. Many Groups see that information about their walks is available locally in places such as libraries, tourist information centres or outdoor shops. Some Groups have

developed good contacts with their local press and get walk details printed regularly.

A new **Led Walks Team** has been set up specifically to offer more support to volunteers who put together walks programmes and lead walks. If your Group would like information or advice on any led walks related issue, the Led Walks Team can be contacted on ledwalks@ramblers.org.uk; 020 7339 8500

There is also a growing resources section for led walks on our website at: www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/support/resources/walksleader and www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/support/resources/walkscoord

Walk Leaders

Walk Leaders and Walks Programme Co-ordinators are key Ramblers volunteers. The **Led Walks Team** is currently trying to get an idea of the number of Walk Leaders in the organisation and to be able to communicate directly with them via a newsletter and training sessions.

Walk Leaders have never been recorded centrally, so in order that the Led Walks Team know who they are and can contact them directly, Walk Leaders and Programme Co-ordinators are being asked to fill in these online forms:

For Walk Leaders:

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/ledwalksform

For Programme Co-ordinators:

www.ramblers.co.uk/volunteer/group-programme/

or

www.ramblers.co.uk/volunteer/area-programme/

Enabling the Led Walks Team to contact these volunteers directly will reduce the administrative burden on Group Secretaries needing to pass information on.

Group Walk Finder

An easy way to publicise walks is to put them on the Group Walk Finder. This lists thousands of walks put on by our Groups. Visitors to the website can key in a location to get details of led walks nearby. Uploading details is easy, log in at www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/password and click on 'Upload Walks'. Here you can find instructions on how to use the system. You can also email us with any Walk Finder queries on volunteer@ramblers.org.uk

Welcoming unfamiliar faces on group walks can be key to ensuring that prospective new members take up walking and come back to the Group. We

strongly encourage Groups to develop a culture amongst their walk leaders that ensures a warm welcome to new people, tells them about the Ramblers and encourages them to join.

Of course, not all members wish to walk with a Group. Groups can also play an important role in getting out the message that any walking is good for physical and mental health. One way to do this is to distribute our '**Get Walking Keep Walking**' leaflets about this locally. Group Secretaries or Publicity Officers can request these leaflets from the **Membership Development and Publicity Team**.

More information on promoting walking can be found at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/aboutus/walking

Navigation & First Aid courses

To encourage walking generally and walk leading within the Group, some Groups run occasional courses in navigation, leadership or first aid. Some general guidelines are available through

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/support/resources/walksleader.htm

The **Led Walks Team** may be able to put you in touch with other Groups who have run such courses and we will be offering a new training package via the Led Walks Team in 2009. This will be co-ordinated across the whole of GB but will be piloted with a few groups initially and then rolled out to other groups in due course.

Groups can use their own funds to put on training courses, paying for the hire of venues or to pay external trainers, as this sits fully within the Ramblers charitable objectives and to the aims of making our walks programme safe and enjoyable.

Members, non-members and Group walks

All members are entitled to join any Ramblers walk, regardless of which Group they belong to.

Promoting the benefits of walking to everyone is one of our core aims, so all walks should also be open to any member of the public. We suggest that Groups should allow non-members to take part in 3 'taster' walks before being expected to join. Walk leaders and existing members are encouraged to stress to prospective members that joining the Ramblers is about more than just the right to walk with local Groups, and is also about supporting our wider charitable work for all walkers. Regardless of who is taking part, a walk is fully covered by our public liability insurance as long as the leader is a Ramblers member and the walk is a recognised part of the Groups activity.

More information about insurance for Group activities can be found at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Support/Basics/Insurance.htm

Firm Ground – Aim 3: Communicating our work

We want to make sure that the image we convey encourages potential supporters.

1. Publicising your Group

As the Ramblers is a national charity, it's important that anyone who comes across Group letters, leaflets or websites is aware that the Groups are a part of the Ramblers.

Printed material

In printed documents, the most important way to do this is to make sure that the Ramblers logo is clearly visible and to include a reference to the fact that the Group forms part of the Ramblers.

Publicity Officer

Newsletter
Editor

Webmaster

Area Secretary

A selection of Ramblers logos can be found at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Support/Basics

Areas often have pre-printed letterheads which they can make available to their Groups for any correspondence. Your Area Secretary is likely to be the best person to ask about this.

A template for letterheaded paper can be found at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Support/Basics/Templates

Websites

Similarly, for Group websites, it is important that they too conform to certain basic guidelines. Websites should

- Include the Ramblers logo
- Include a link to our website home page and "Join Us" page
- Make clear that the Group is part of the Ramblers
- Be kept up-to-date
- Avoid promoting walking companies other than Ramblers Holidays

Group publications of local walks

Plenty of Groups produce leaflets, booklets or books of local walks that are then made available for sale to the public. The **Publications Team** can provide advice on copyright, style, content, and marketing, as well as supplying Groups with an interest-free loan and ISBN. All new Group publications are reviewed in walk magazine.

Advertising Guidelines

Many Groups are able to get advertising or sponsorship to help finance publications such as newsletters, walks programmes or annual reports. Often this is local companies, for instance, local outdoor shops.

If you're looking into getting advertising, please read our advertising guidelines, which can be found at

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/support/resources/newsletter.htm

or contact our **Marketing and Communications Division**.

Firm Ground – Aim 4: A well-run Organisation

We need to maximise our scope for success by ensuring our organisation has efficient organisational and financial structures in place.

1. Information from central office

In print

We communicate with our Areas and Groups through a series of circular letters. These are sent out from Central Office on the last Thursday of every month to the relevant volunteers. Instead of monthly circulars, Group Secretaries get a quarterly newsletter called “*Group News*”. This contains all the information that you need to know and act upon as Group Secretary, as well as a digest of the other news that has been sent to other volunteers and committee members.

Group News is divided into these sections:

- “Need to Act” which gives you the information we need you to respond to, or to take to your Group committee. This varies from quarter to quarter but could include requests for to Groups to organise walks for our annual walking festivals, or requests to pass on information to your Group members or walk leaders, for instance, about insurance or other policies and guidelines.
- “Need to Know”. This gives you a digest of other information to keep you up-to-date. Much of this is sent separately, and in more detail, to other volunteers.

For instance, we might tell you that we've been in touch with Group Treasurers to remind them of the annual end-of-year returns, or with Footpath Secretaries to invite them to contribute to a consultation.

- “Campaign update”. This gives you the latest headlines from the main campaigns.
- “Offers”. The latest offers from our partners, such as Ramblers Holidays Worldwide or UIA insurance to keep you and Group members in touch
- “Internal news”. Details of new staff and a summary of information from the latest Board of Trustees meeting.

Group News is sent out at the end of March, June, September and December.

On our website

In addition, all the monthly circulars are also posted up on the password-protected section of our website at www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/password There is one username and password per Group (yours was included in your letter of welcome).

Within this section is a page which lists the latest circulars in chronological order. If you really want to keep on top of everything that is happening in the Ramblers, then this is the best place to look to get the details. This page is updated at the end of every month.

Within this section there are also resources for Footpath Secretaries and Access Officers.

This section is also where you are likely to find a link to surveys or consultation questionnaires, where you can submit your comments directly online.

In the know! Circular codes

Each circular is given a code for reference (eg 08/77). The first part of the code refers to the year that it was written. The second part is an identifying number. So all circulars sent out in 2008 will have a code beginning “08/...”

For future reference! Electronic communication

Lots of Group Secretaries would now rather receive communication from central office solely in electronic format, without the paper versions being sent out automatically too.

We are currently looking into setting up an “opt-out” option for this on our new database, which will enable us to cut down on the amount of paper we send out.

2. What the Ramblers does with your contact details

As a Group Secretary, you are a key local contact for the Ramblers. Your contact details – your phone number, email address or Group website address - will be given out to third parties or publicised in the public domain in the following instances (please see the **Data Protection Act** box below for further information on this):

a) Welcome letter

New Members receive a welcome letter from central office as part of their joining pack. This lists their local Group with Group Secretary contact details.

b) General enquiries received at central office

If central office receives phone calls or emails asking for details of local Groups, your name and contact details will be provided.

c) Group details on the website

Group details are listed on the Ramblers website at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/areas_groups/areas_and_groups

Contact information for the Group is listed here. Names are not listed here, but a contact phone number or email address is. By default, these are yours.

There is also a facility to email the Group and by default we use your email address. However, to avoid spam this facility is driven through a separate form which means that your actual email address is not visible.

Please contact us on ramblers@ramblers.org.uk if these details need updating.

d) For people without internet access

Not everyone has access to the internet to look up contact details on our website. A comprehensive list of contact details of all Area and Group Secretaries can be provided in paper format on request instead. This may be where a member of another Group would like to contact you to obtain some information about your Group, or your walks programme.

The Data Protection Act – consent form for volunteers

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act we need your signed consent to publicise your contact details or give them out to enquirers.

There should have been a **DPA consent form** in your welcome pack. Please complete it and return to central office as soon as possible – alternatively, you can submit one online at: www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/dataform

A copy of the DPA consent form can be found at **annexe A** at the back of this booklet. Please give a photocopy of this form to any new volunteers (as listed on the back of the form) who take on a role in your Group as they need to complete one too (or they can submit one online).

If you have any questions about how the Data Protection Act affects you, please contact the **Volunteer Development Team** on 020 7339 8541; volsupport@ramblers.org.uk

Support from colleagues

Members of your Area committee or volunteers in other Groups will always be a great place to find support and advice. In addition to this the following support is available:

For specific policy or campaign issues, staff in central office, the Scottish and Welsh offices can answer queries, eg the **Finance Team** or **Led Walks Team**.

There is a full list of staff on our website at :

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/password

If your query is more general, is on a more administrative matter or you simply don't know where to direct it, the **Volunteer Development Team** is a good one-stop-shop for any queries and questions:

020 7339 8520 ; volsupport@ramblers.org.uk

Support on the website

There is a growing section of information for volunteers who run Areas or Groups at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Running

Leaflets and publicity available for Groups

To promote walking a range of leaflets is available which highlight the benefits of walking as a healthy activity. To support Groups with recruitment, leaflets and posters are available, some of which can include specific Group information. There are also discount membership forms for Groups running special promotional events. Contact the **Membership Development & Publicity Team**.

Group administration & contact

Address labels of all current Group members are available if you want to carry out mailings to members. This contact information can also be emailed as a data file. Contact the **Membership Services Team**.

Groups can purchase reply-paid envelopes which can be useful if conducting a questionnaire of members. These are addressed to central office who can forward them to a Group contact. Contact the **Admin Team**.

Fundraising and Publications

The **Fundraising Team** can give advice to Groups looking to raise funds locally. This may vary from looking for sponsorship for Group programmes to applications for grant funding.

The **Publications Team** can give advice on producing a local walk guide.

The **Press Office** can give support to Groups who are considering engaging with the media.

Handbooks for other Group volunteers

A number of handbooks are available which are specifically relevant for particular volunteer roles within the Group. They are listed below along with the team to contact:

Treasurers Guidelines – Finance Team

Membership Recruitment and Publicity Handbook –
Membership Development and Publicity Team

Membership Secretaries should contact the **Membership Services Team**

Media Pack – Press Office

Footpath Secretaries, Access Officers, Countryside Officers and Ramblers members serving on LAFs (Local Access Forums) should contact the **Walking Environment Team**

Outdoor Access: Getting Involved pack (Scotland only) – **Scottish Office**

4. Communicating with your members

Welcome letters

One of the best ways to welcome new members to your Group and to let them know what to expect is through a “Welcome Letter”. This may thank the member for joining, give an indication of the Group’s activities and encourage them to get involved, and give some information about who to contact in the Group on different matters.

We would encourage every Group to make contact with its new members in this way. Many Areas have pre-printed Ramblers headed paper which we encourage Groups to use. Contact your Area Secretary about this.



Walk programmes and newsletters

Group members can expect to remain well-informed about their Group activities, such as the programme of walks, Group news or campaigns and any Group social events.

Nearly all Groups put together a programme of walks and/ or a newsletter between 2-4 times a year. In most cases this is printed out and posted to members. Groups are strongly encouraged to make these publications available to all their members by posting them out to the members who want to receive them. Where this is done Groups should send out these publications free-of-charge to their own members.

It is possible that Groups may make their printed walks programmes available to members of other Groups, or to non-members. Where this is the case, it is possible to make a small charge to cover printing, postage and administration. Most Groups also make their programme available online by uploading walks to the Group Walks Finder on:

www.ramblers.co.uk/members/walks

Some Groups do not produce a printed walks programme or newsletter. Where this is the case, the Group should make it clear to all members where they will find this information.

Letters and email

Groups increasingly communicate with members by email. This is acceptable, and indeed, is encouraged as it is more cost-effective and less labour-intensive. However, Groups are asked to respect the fact that some members may not use email. This may mean, for instance, keeping a note of members without email and sending out a welcome letter and AGM notice by post to them instead.

AGMs

Consistent with the democracy within the Ramblers, each Group must organise an Annual General Meeting (AGM) every year. At the AGM the Group accounts are presented and the key volunteer roles (Secretary, Chair, Treasurer etc) are elected. Our financial year runs from 1 October – 30 September, and so, in order to have a timely consideration of the Groups accounts, AGMs should be held sometime between October – December.

Every member of the Group has an entitlement to attend and vote at the AGM and notice of the AGM must be given in writing to every member at least 14 days before the meeting.

Most Groups give notice by including a note about their AGM in the walks programme which is sent to every member. However, if a walk programme is not produced, or if it is not sent as standard to every member, it is important to send a separate notice.

After your AGM takes place there is a standard form you need to fill in, informing central office of any changes to your volunteer officers. Please send this in as soon as possible after your AGM so that the central database can be updated. The form, **AGM form - changes to volunteer officers**, can be found at **annexe B** at the back of this booklet. It can also be submitted online at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/agmform

More detailed information on putting on AGMs, the democratic process, electing volunteer officers and constitutions can be found on our website at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Running/Basics

5. Dealing with difficulties

Difficult Members or disagreements

On very rare occasions there can be difficulties with individual members in a Group. There have been cases in the past where, due to an individual's behaviour, Groups have felt the need to raise the matter with the individual concerned and sometimes take further action. In extreme cases, Groups have wanted to exclude an individual from membership of their Group.

Group Chair

Area Secretary

Area Chair

In situations like these, there are three places you should consider going for support and advice:

- **Your colleagues in the Group and at Area level**
They are likely to be an excellent source of advice and guidance
- **The Volunteer Development Team**
They can help with advice on appropriate ways to approach the matter
- **The Led Walks Team**
If the issue is predominantly about, or takes place, on walks

The Ramblers governing documents make it clear that Group grievances towards individuals should be outlined clearly, giving as much specific information about the reasons for the Groups concerns as possible. Any conversations, meetings, decisions or course of action taken in a situation of this kind should be documented clearly in writing to the individual concerned, ie in a follow-up letter.

The membership structure of the organisation also means that any action taken towards an individual member is likely to require the involvement of the Area. Situations like these need not be complicated, and are, thankfully, extremely rare. However, when they do occur they may require some sensitive handling including background knowledge of the Ramblers grievance procedure and its governing documents.

To help you deal with situations like these, the Ramblers has developed a **Code of Conduct** for all members, volunteers, trustees and staff. The Code outlines the values of the organisation and lists a number of points which define acceptable conduct within the Ramblers. A copy of the Code can be found at **annexe C** at the back of this booklet. Each Area and Group has a copy of the Code and each new member of staff, trustee and volunteer is given a copy as part of their induction pack. The Code should be shown to any individual whose behaviour is causing difficulties for others in the Group as a first stage of any action.

ASAP!

The **Volunteer Development Team** can provide further assistance and support to Groups in instances like these. Contact the team on 020 7339 8541; volsupport@ramblers.org.uk

Where incidents do occur, we urge Groups to let us know of the issue at the outset.

Child Protection

The Ramblers take child protection very seriously. We have a Child Protection policy and procedure that all members are expected to adhere to. If, through your involvement with the Ramblers, you, or any member of your Group ever have a concern about the well being of a child, you should contact the **Child Protection Officer** at central office.

If concerns arise, no Group members or volunteers should take any action without first discussing the matter with the Child Protection Officer, unless a situation arises where a child is at risk of significant and imminent harm.

Information on child protection, including the Ramblers Child Protection Policy, can be found at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/running/basics/childprotection

The Child Protection Officer can be contacted on 020 7339 8574 or hazel.robinson@ramblers.org.uk

6. The Ramblers calendar

October	1 st	Beginning of Ramblers financial year	↑ ↓	Groups hold AGMs
	31 st	Deadline for Group financial accounts to reach Central Office		
November				
December				
January		Festival of Winter Walks (Christmas & New Year holiday)		
February				
March			↑ ↓	Welsh Council Scottish Council General Council
April		walk Guide published		
May	30 th	Annual Reports and Accounts released Get Walking Day		
June				
July				
August				
September		Members Day New recruitment literature sent to Groups		
	30 th	End of Ramblers financial year		

7. The Ramblers structure and legal documents

Governance

The Ramblers is a registered charity (in England and Wales number 1093577, in Scotland number SC039799) and is a company limited by guarantee in England, Scotland and Wales (no. 4458492). The scope of its charitable activities is limited to Britain (ie, not extending to Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man).

Our governing documents are the Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&A) together with the Standing Orders. A copy is available at :

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Running/Basics/MAndA.htm>

The Board of Trustees hold overall responsibility for the organisation. They are all volunteers. The Board is comprised of 9 ordinary Trustees, the Chairman, Vice-

Chair, Honorary Treasurer and the Welsh Chairman and Scottish Convener. Three members of the Board can be co-opted.

The Trustees appoint the Chief Executive who in turn is responsible for appointing the staff in the London, Scottish and Welsh offices and others across the country. The work of the Chief Executive is determined by the strategy as approved by the Trustees.

The Ramblers current 5-year strategic plan, "*Fresh Air, Firm Ground*" is available at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Running/Basics/Strategy.htm

Structure: Areas & Groups

For the sub-division of our work and as a mechanism for ensuring membership representation, we divide Britain into 57 "Areas". (There are 45 Areas in England, 7 in Wales and 5 in Scotland.) Each Group falls within the administration of an Area. Areas and Groups are each governed by their own Constitutions. These must be in line with the Ramblers own M&A and most follow the format of the model constitutions.

Model constitutions are available at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/Running/Basics/Constitutions.htm

Areas have certain authority over their Groups – for instance, Areas decide how much income from central funds each of its Groups receives. Areas also influence the policy and direction of the Ramblers by having the right to submit one motion each year to the General Council. This is the representative assembly of members which meet once a year to discuss and vote on policy, to elect the Board of Trustees and to approve the annual report and accounts. All Groups have the right to be represented at Area level on the Area Council. As well as being a good way to keep in touch with our wider work both in the Area and nationally, sending representatives to Area Council is the way in which Group members can exercise their democratic membership rights and have their say.

Scotland & Wales

We have a devolved structure in Scotland and Wales. Both are constituent parts of the GB association, but with significant autonomy set out in the Scottish and Welsh constitutions and their Memoranda of Authority. Members are represented through their own delegate assemblies, Scottish Council and Welsh Council meeting annually. They have their own Executive Committees, elected by the membership which are similar to the Board of Trustees and responsible for furthering Ramblers work in Scotland and Wales. A member from Scotland and Wales sits on the Board of Trustees.

Further details about the Ramblers structure are at:

www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/GetInvolved/AreasGroups/OurStructure

8. Annexes

Annexe A – Data Protection Consent form for Volunteers

Annexe B – AGM form – changes to volunteer officers

Annexe C – Code of Conduct