

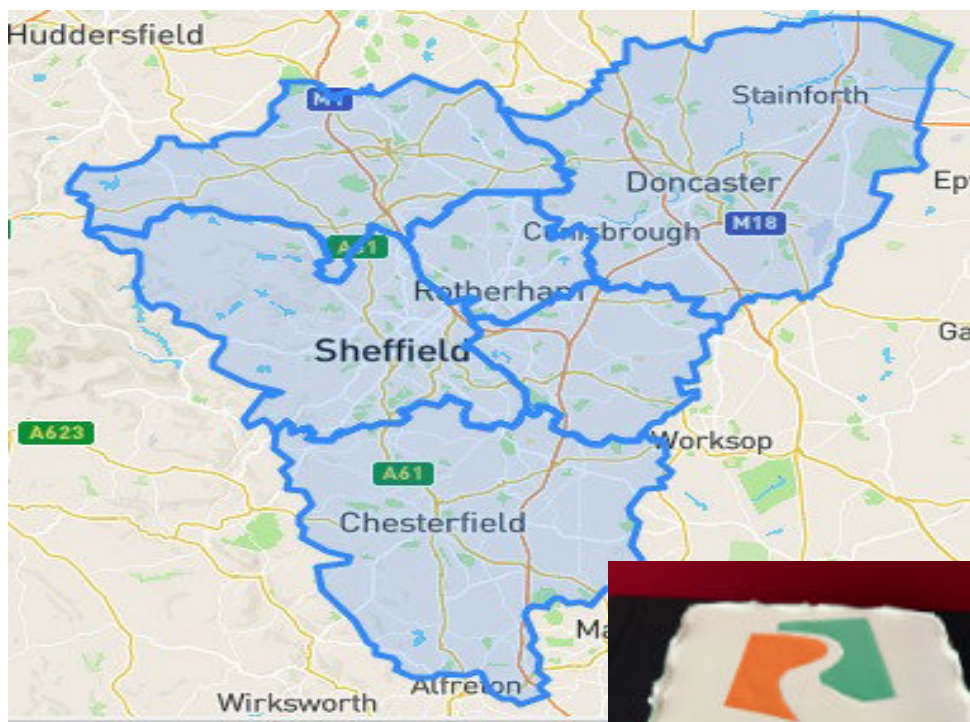


**South Yorks &
N.E. Derbyshire**

SYNED RAMBLERS AREA AGM

Saturday January 17th 2026 Starting at 2pm

**Herringthorpe United Reformed Church,
Wickersley Road, Rotherham S60 4JN**



AREA ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

**All Members welcome to attend
and participate**



Annual General Meeting 2026

All SYNED members and representatives of affiliated organisations are invited to join us at Herringthorpe United Reformed Church, Wickersley Road, Rotherham S60 4JN on Saturday January 17th 2026 starting at 2pm

AGENDA

1. Chairman' welcome and opening remarks
2. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
3. Remembering Area Members who have died during the last twelve months
4. President' Address
5. Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting
6. Any Matters Arising from the Minutes.
7. Annual Report for 2024/2025
8. Financial statement – Accounts for year ending September 30th 2025
9. Appointment of Area President and Vice Presidents
10. Election of Officers and Council Members:
Area Chairman Area Secretary Area Treasurer
Area Access Officer Area Footpath Officer
Area Webmaster, Area Membership Sec
Area Publicity & Social Media Officer
- 11a. Two Members' Representatives on the Area Council
(nominations will be welcome at the meeting but helpful if notified beforehand, with written agreement of nominees if unable to attend.)
- 11b. Group Secretaries should also provide details of up to 2 representatives of their Group appointed at their AGM to sit on the Area Council
- 11c. Two Representatives from the 5 walking groups affiliated to the AC
12. Appointment of Independent Examiner (Treasurer to Nominate)
13. Affiliation to like minded organisations
14. Appointment of Area Delegates to 2026 General Council on April 25th at NEC (tbc)
15. Motions to General Council and for Consideration by the SYNED AGM
(none submitted by Dec 20th. Only emergency motions accepted)
16. Any Other Business / Notices
 - a) Proposals to Change the Ramblers System of Governance
 - b) Reviving the Sheffield Walkers Festival

After the formal meeting and a short break:-

MARK LAVENSTEIN Ramblers Trustee

will speak on current Ramblers concerns, activities & campaigns

Please indicate to Chair or Secretary if you have any other AGM business you wish to discuss asap (and prior to the start of the Meeting)

Please Note: This SYNED Area AGM will be Recorded

The Ramblers Association is a Registered Charity (England & Wales no 1093577, Scotland SC039799
And a Company limited by Guarantee, registered in England & Wales 4458492
Registered Office: The Ramblers, 13 Dirty Lane, London SE1 9PA



Herringthorpe United Reformed Church, Wickersley Road, Rotherham S60 4JN

w3w: saving.senses.play
or SK 453 915

There is car parking at the church

MORNING WALK

There will be a leisurely 5 mile walk starting at 10:30am from the venue following the Stag-Wickersley Circular route. Finishing around 1pm to allow some refreshments before the AGM starts at 2pm.

Walkers are asked to come suitably equipped.

The Walk will be led by members of the Rotherham Metro Ramblers who are our hosts this year

BE AN ACTIVE RAMBLER

Attending the SYNED Area Ramblers AGM is your chance to participate in the good governance of your local walking organisation and help keep it moving forward in these difficult times.

Join us on local Group walks every week and continue to initiate and help support our campaigns to open up the countryside for everyone.

DO JOIN US ALL MEMBERS WELCOME TO ATTEND & PARTICIPATE

More details on the SYNED website

<https://synedramblers.org.uk>

Future SYNED Area Council meetings during 2026:-

Mondays February 16th; August 10th and November 16th
all will start at 19:00 hrs and be using Zoom

The AC Meeting on Saturday May 9th will be an in person walk & talk meeting at a location still to be decided

2027 SYNED AREA AGM – Saturday January 16th 2027
venue tba – details to follow

Minutes of the SYNED Area Annual General Meeting

Sunday 19th January 2025

Held in person at Tickhill Pavilion, Tickhill, Doncaster, DN11 9QN

Present: Jez Kenyon, Area Vice Chair (S40's); Tom Platt, guest speaker (Central Office); Malcolm Dixon, Area Secretary (Sheffield); Sara Whitby, Area Publicity Officer (Sheff 20's&30's); Johnathan Revell (DVR); Kate Frizzell (DVR); John Watson (DVR); Pat White (DVR); Helen Barker (DVR); Les Seaman, Area Access Officer (Sheffield); Malcolm Mackay (Sheffield); Cath MacKay, VP (Sheffield); Sylvia Ward (DVR), Brian Ward (DVR); Liz Sharp (Sheff 40's); Gareth Cade (Doncaster); S J Tomlinson (Doncaster); David Horne (Doncaster); Peter Rowsell (Doncaster); Martin Evans (Sheff 20's&30's); Jennifer Lear (Sheff 20's&30's); Lottie Smith (Sheff 40's); Glenna Briggs (Rotherham Metro); Philip Ryder (Rotherham Metro); David Gadd (Doncaster); Joan Dalton (Chesterfield).

Apologies: David Blunkett, Area VP; Gavin Johns, Area Treasurer; Roly Smith, Area VP; Terry Howard, Area VP; Cath Baker (Sheffield); Kath Craig (Step Out Sheffield)

1. Chair's welcome and opening remarks:

Vice Chair Jez Kenyon opened the Meeting by asking David Gadd to welcome us all on behalf of the Doncaster Ramblers, our host group this afternoon – David also led the excellent and well attended walk prior to the meeting. Jez summarised the previous year's activities and reminded us of the funding options available for projects and initiatives – urged all groups to get involved and make plans!

2. Attendance and apologies for absence: as above

3. Remembering Area Members who have died during the last 12 months:

A minute's silence was held, and tribute paid to members who have sadly passed away in the last year and how much we owe to those who went before us. These include Allen Pestell (our previous Chair), Chris Maille, Pauline Gibbons, Mrs Raynor and Clifford Johnson.

- 4. Minutes of the 2024 Annual General meeting** - Accepted.
- 5. Matters Arising from the 2024 Minutes** – none
- 6. Annual Report for 2023/2024** - Accepted.
- 7. Financial statement – Accounts for year ending September 30th, 2024.** - Accounts accepted.
- 8. Appointment of Area President and Vice Presidents –**
President – remains vacant. An honorary role, any suggestions welcome.
Vice Presidents – David Blunkett; Roly Smith; Terry Howard;
Helen Jackson; Cath MacKay; David Gadd.
'All to continue' proposed and accepted.

9. Election of Officers and Council Members

Thanks to all current council officers and reps, and thanks given to Johnathan Revell who has now stepped down from his role as webmaster.

All positions below proposed/nominated, seconded, and accepted.

Area Chair	– Jez Kenyon
Area Vice Chair	- vacant
Area Secretary	– Malcolm Dixon
Area Treasurer	– Gavin Johns
Area Access Officer	– Les Seaman
Area Membership Secretary	– Helen Barker
Area Minutes Secretary	– Helen Barker
Area Publicity & Social Media Officer	– Sara Whitby
Area Footpath Officer	- vacant
Area Webmaster	– vacant
Area Countryside Officer	- vacant

If anyone wishes to get involved or is interested in knowing more about any vacant positions, please let Malcolm know. We do need nominations especially for the vacant roles – anyone wanting to know more or see a ‘job spec’ is welcome to speak to any committee member.

Roles can be shared or split to accommodate interests and availability.

10. Other council members:

a. Two Members’ Representatives on the Area Council

– Cath McKay proposed and seconded.

We need a second person as Terry has stepped down. Please contact Malcolm if you would like to nominate someone from your group. These are members without portfolio, are there to represent the interests of all groups members.

b. All Group Secretaries – ACTION REQUIRED

All groups may send 1 or 2 members to represent the group at the Area Council meetings. Please try and send at least one to every meeting (mainly held on Zoom for the coming year) It does not have to be the same person each time.

c. Two Representatives from the walking groups affiliated to the AC

– no current reps –

ACTION – Area Secretary to write to them all and ask for nominations.

11. Appointment of Independent Examiner

– Lorraine Watson thanked and proposed/accepted for a further 12 mths.

12 Affiliation to like-minded organisations – as an area we affiliate to 4 organisations. These are: Campaign for the Protection of Rural England; the Peak & Northern Footpath Society; Peak District Green Lanes Alliance; and the Open Spaces Society. Continuation of these affiliations proposed and approved.

No further nominations for similar groups made.

13. Appointment of Area Delegates to 2024 General Council on April 5th at Birmingham NEC – Liz Sharp and Sara Whitby

nominated subject to confirmation of availability for that date.

14. Motions to General Council and for Consideration

by the SYNED AGM - No Motions submitted for General Council this year.

15. Any Other Business / Notices – none

End of formal AGM followed by a short break and refreshments courtesy of Doncaster group.

**Speaker – Tom Platt
Chief Programmes and Delivery Officer for The Ramblers**

After the break Tom thanked us for inviting him, and for the pre meeting walk. He had enjoyed the conversations he had and would take comments back to Central Office. He spoke to us in detail about current Ramblers concerns, activities and campaigns. He gave us a broad and interesting overview of the Ramblers new strategy and spoke about initiatives such as the Path Accessibility Fund, Walk Together Project and the Out There Awards – a programme now being rolled out which is aimed at young walkers from 18-26 years old to help them build confidence and experience of being outdoors.

Tom then held a Q&A session which led to lively and interesting discussions within the room.

After a vote of thanks to Tom, Doncaster Ramblers for hosting us and everyone who attended, Jez closed the meeting.



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Area Secretary's Review of the Year

In many ways it has been an active year for SYNED Area officials. In addition to the Area AGM hosted for us by Donacster Ramblers in Tickhill, we have held 6 Area Councils since Oct 2024 and held an additional one this last October just to discuss the proposals to change the Ramblers various levels of governance.

Most of these meetings have been held online using Zoom which, although not popular with everyone, helps to cut down on the time and travel involved for those who are able to attend.. This is maybe more convenient for the participants but can have the effect of excluding others. We have tried to balance this by having some in person meetings. We are also using the WhatsApp app to have more immediate discussions amongst Area Officers. Do let us know if you'd like to be included in these discussions.

We had the innovation of a 'Walk and Talk' AC last May when we used a walk around Bradfield to look at path & stile improvements we had helped pay for and then sat down and suggested a number of others that could be improved. These will be in collaboration with colleagues from the Steel Valley Project amongst others. We will provide some of the funding where it can't be sourced externally from such as FIPL (Farming In Protected Landscapes) funds.

Under the eye-catching slogan: "Pimp My Stile" we ask and hope to encourage ALL our Area members to report any path and/or stile problems they encounter when out on a walk. You should report these issues to your local highway authority such as "prow@sheffield.gov.uk" in Sheffield or you use our own path reporting tool: "<https://www.jez.cc/paths>". Our colleagues in the Peak & Northern Footpath Society have their own Path Checker App which non-members can also use to report path problems.

Blocked paths and broken stiles are common problems that stop people from enjoying going out walking or even going out in the first place. Poor transport services and connections are another especially for those without access to a car. Another issue for our Groups continues to be finding sufficient walk leaders to be able to put on a consistent walks programme throughout the year. Since the Covid restrictions we've found that many of our walk leaders are no longer coming forward with walks and new people aren't coming forward either to take their place and learn their routes.

Central Office's stipulation that every walk leader has to be registered or have sufficient knowledge or experience, whilst commendable, has discouraged many from putting themselves forward or even trying the (usually) online training that the Ramblers has made available. Some of our Groups have offered to help members with this training.

It doesn't have to be done on your own but can be done with others and can help expand your enjoyment as well as your experience and knowledge. Do try it. (go to: "<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/walk-leadership>" and download the walk leaders handbook).

Over the year, I've tried to attend the quarterly online Midland & East Regional Cluster Meetings organised by our Regional Engagement Officer, Claire Watkins along with Officers from the many other Areas within this large Region. They are meant to be inclusive forums for us to share information and best practice. However they come over as very much like local managers being summoned to report to their Regional Manager

to be told the latest statistics and plans. Although improving, there's very little chance to actually discuss issues as you would at a more informal in-person gathering.

When I've been available I've attended meetings (also online) of the Sheffield Walking & Cycling Forum. These seem to have become dominated by local Councillors and Council Officers and their various Active Travel plans for Sheffield citizens in and around the City. It has become increasingly hard to put forward the voice of the pedestrian and bus user and their equally valid concerns.

Much of our time over the last six months has been spent discussing the various proposals to change the way the Ramblers is run. There is an article following that explains the development of those proposals in more detail, although detail has been one of the many things that some of these proposals have lacked especially as they affect Groups and Areas. These have been the bedrock of the Ramblers movement ever since it was started. And whilst the Board of Trustees and Central Office staff can be commended for the various consultation exercises that have taken place as these proposals have been worked on and discussed, many of us felt it has been at the

expense of the campaigning work we should be doing in regard to improving the path network and encouraging greater access for all to the countryside which is meant to be the Ramblers mission and passion.

We could and should have been doing more without these distractions which still have some way to go leading up to the General Council next April and whatever comes after that.



2025 saw the 90th Anniversary of the founding of the Ramblers. It also saw the 125th Anniversary of the first walk of the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers Club, founded and led by GHB Ward. A plaque has been fixed to one of the foyer walls in Sheffield Station to commemorate that first outing. We hope to celebrate this ourselves with a short ceremony followed by a walk from that station plaque to the Access plaque at the entrance to the Town Hall.



We are looking at doing this on Sunday January 25th (TBC) when the annual Sheffield Heritage Fair is taking place in the Millennium Gallery and where the three Sheffield Groups will have a joint publicity stall. Do come and join us there.

Summary of the Extraordinary General Council Meeting on Ramblers Governance Reform (December 6th 2025)

Sara and Liz, representing South Yorkshire and NE Derbyshire Ramblers, attended the Extraordinary General Council (GC) meeting in London on December 6th to discuss significant proposals for reforming the organization's governance structure. These reforms are being prompted by a need to align with recommendations from the Charities Commission and are scheduled for a principles vote at the April 2026 General Council.

Current Governance System

The current structure relies on the **General Council** as the primary democratic decision-making body. GC members are drawn from Ramblers areas (like SYNED), supplemented by the organization's Trustees and Vice Presidents. The GC is responsible for electing the **Trustees**, who sit on a 16-member Board. This Board acts as the ultimate decision-making body, electing its own chair and treasurer, and includes three appointed members to ensure the necessary skills mix. The current system for electing Trustees involves GC representatives voting based on candidate videos, a process that limits direct influence by the wider membership.

Core Proposals for Governance Change

The proposed reforms aim to create a more democratic and skills-focused structure:

Dissolution of General Council and replacement by "One Member, One Vote":

The key democratic change is the dissolution of the current GC system. This will be replaced by a system where **every Ramblers member** can vote for Trustees via a national online process, based on information provided by the candidates. This addresses the consultation finding of strong support for a "one member, one vote" approach.

- **Reduced and Balanced Board of Trustees:** It is proposed to reduce the Board from **16 to 12** members, conforming to the maximum size recommended by the Charities Commission. Each Trustee will serve a three-year term, renewable up to six years, and will hold responsibility for steering the Ramblers across the whole of Great Britain. The Board will internally appoint its Chair and Treasurer from within the 12 members.
- **A 6-Elected and 6-Appointed Structure:** The new Board will be evenly split:
 - **Six Elected Trustees:** This half will include one Trustee elected from **Wales** and one from **Scotland** (required due to their respective devolved administrations), leaving four other Great Britain (GB) elected posts.
 - **Six Appointed Trustees:** These members will be selected for specific, crucial skills (e.g., financial expertise, safeguarding, marketing) that the Board needs. They will go through a rigorous application and interview process. Membership is not a compulsory prerequisite for appointed Trustees.

New Member Engagement and Accountability

The proposals include new methods for national interaction and member accountability:

Online AGM and Regional Forums: The annual national AGM will be held **online for**

two out of every three years, with an in-person meeting every third year.

To compensate for the reduced in-person networking, the Board will establish annual, face-to-face **Regional Forums** (likely one each in Scotland, Wales, Southeast, Southwest, North, and Midlands).

These Forums are intended to provide a direct route for Trustees to interact with a wider variety of members than the current GC system allows, fostering discussion, learning, training, and celebration (e.g., walks and recognition of active members).

It was agreed that a planning group for each Forum would be set up, consisting of a **majority of members**, along with Trustees and Ramblers staff.

Contentious Issues and Underlying Debates

The December 6th meeting focused on resolving key points of contention ahead of the 2026 vote:

1. **Election of the Four GB Trustees:** A central debate revolved around who should vote for the four non-country-specific elected Trustees. While there was agreement that candidates could be drawn from anywhere in GB, some argued for **England-only voting** since Wales and Scotland already have specific elected posts. Others felt voting should be open to **all GB members**.
2. **Board Balance and Accountability:** A significant concern raised by some current GC members is the 6-6 balance, perceiving it as a potential "power grab." Critics argue that if the six appointed members vote together against the six elected members, the Chair's casting vote could overrule the elected representatives. The Chair defended the proposal, stating that all 12 Trustees are equally responsible for the interests of the entire organization, and the appointed places are essential for ensuring the Board possesses the diverse skills required by the Charity Commission.
3. **The Democracy of the General Council:** Underlying the changes is the debate over the effectiveness and democracy of the current GC. Critics note that the GC is expensive, concentrating resources and scrutiny power among a small group of members who are often self-appointed local activists, willing to travel and attend year after year. Proponents, however, view it as a vital route for elected grassroots activists to network and hold the Trustees directly to account.

The proposed system aims to shift resources from centrally funded travel for a few to a widely democratic online vote and localized face-to-face interaction via the Regional Forums.

Barnsley & Penistone Ramblers Group

Barnsley and Penistone Group, although still relatively small, goes from strength to strength. We have acquired several new members this year who are quickly becoming regulars. One even leading local walks.

Our fortnightly short friendship midweek walks are very popular with around 14-16 people regularly attending. Recently it was agreed we would do a slightly longer walk, around 4-5 miles on the alternate week. This again is proving very popular and will continue for the foreseeable future. These walks are always finished off with a visit to a local cafe for coffee, cake and chat. We feel these interludes are as important as the actual walks. Friendships can develop and ideas and information are exchanged.

We still offer the usual 8-10 miler on a Saturday, which can range from something fairly local in the winter months to Derbyshire and North Yorkshire in the summer months.

We had a coach trip to Scarborough in July, which was open to friends and family. There was an 8 mile walk from Cloughton across the cliffs into Scarborough. Those not able or wishing to do the walk were dropped off in Scarborough to spend the day as they wished. As usual, the day was finished off with the obligatory fish and chips!!

20 or so members, friends and family enjoyed our Annual Dinner in February at a local hostelry. We also had around 25 people attend our annual Christmas get together/faith supper which included the usual mayhem of games and quizzes.

One of our walk leaders has had 3 walks published in the 'About Town' magazine. It was wonderful to see his work in print. Well done Ken.

Although we no longer have a printed programme, all walks are uploaded by our clever techy member onto our website. We have a very active Whats App group where we all keep in touch with each other and update information where necessary. Our photographic genius also uses Whats App to show us the latest walk photos.

I would like to thank everyone in the group, too many to mention, that help to keep the group thriving. From the member who keeps the website updated, to our wonderful walk leaders who keep finding interesting and scenic walks for the group. Especially, to the walkers themselves, who turn up come rain or shine to join the walks and the pub/teashop chat afterwards.....Thank you.

Carol Wood, Chair, Barnsley & Penistone Group

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/ramblers-groups/barnsley-penistone-group>

Chesterfield & NE Derbyshire Ramblers

Our group has enjoyed yet another successful walking year. We have been able to offer up to 6 walks over 4 days of the week in most weeks of the year. We have in fact accumulated a total of over 20,000 miles across all the walks.

Our walk leaders have continued to offer their time in recceing and leading walks. A good number have now either completed the Walk Leader or self-certified their walk leader experience. I am still encouraging and supporting people to become Rambler qualified leaders although, as a group, we still have more progress to make.

Over this last year although our membership has slightly diminished, I have seen a real growth in the social side of our group. Across our groups there have been opportunities to attend Ceilidhs, afternoon teas, spa days, short breaks and holidays, tea and cake after walks, free beer and even a wedding! We have also celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Chesterfield Round Walk. On a sadder note we have also celebrated the lives of our sadly departed members at their funeral or memorial services.

Over the year the committee has continued to work behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of our group. There has been much work to try to engage with Derbyshire County Council ROW department in order to preserve, maintain and improve our rich path network. We were involved with the local NHS to promote our group at a health and well being event - but this was cancelled at very short notice.

The committee has also made representations concerning the Chesterfield to Willington National grid upgrade - hopefully to preserve footpath access. We also responded to the consultation document for Derbyshire County Council to be reorganised into 2 main areas which would subsume the existing local council areas. Our response was with particular reference to the management, preservation and maintenance of ROW's.

I would like to thank all of our volunteers :- walk leaders, the committee and all other people who contribute to the successful running of our group.

Joan Dalton,
Chair, C&NED Ramblers
chesterfieldramblers.com



Doncaster Ramblers

The Doncaster Group continues to function well. We offer three walks a week, a 5-7 mile walk on Thursday mornings and longer walks on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

There has been an issue over the early starting time of some walks, particularly on Saturdays. The committee discussed the matter and reiterated that we would prefer the traditional 10.00 start, but acknowledged that if the leader wants to start at a different time that is their decision. Occasionally a 10.00 start walk is offered as an alternative to the 9.30 start.

Regarding the need for leaders to be qualified we have 45 members on the Active Walk Leader list, 28 members having completed the training with a few in the pipeline. There have been a handful of members who have said that they will not lead again, but these could be considered as 'natural wastage'. Our group secretary has worked very hard to encourage those members who struggled to complete the process.

The walks for Doncaster Carers have continued, with monthly walks throughout the summer. However the number of carers and cared-for people walking has remained low and it is an open question regarding whether these walks will continue in 2026.

We continue to link with the Doncaster council Rights of Way Department and provide monthly maintenance sessions. They are supported by a team of members and non-members to carry out the work. Making the maintenance photos and a report more visible on the website was an excellent decision to publicise this work.

We also continue to link with the RoW Dept to monitor the network for the council as well as dealing with submitting our opinions regarding diversion orders, etc.

In January of this year the Doncaster Group hosted the AGM of the South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Area of Ramblers. Hosting the AGM is rotated between the eight groups in Area and we last hosted the AGM in 2016. After the necessary admin of the AGM the guest speaker, Tom Platt, from Ramblers Central Office, updated us on what was happening in Ramblers in general and then took questions.

One question was about the possible solar farm in the area. He pointed out that it was a nuanced issue, with the loss of countryside balanced against the need for solar power. In this past year we were urged to support the protests against the huge solar farm on Conisbrough Parks and beyond.

We issued a statement pointing out the conflicting issues and saying that Doncaster Ramblers would not be taking a view in support or against the solar farm, but accepting that our members, as individuals, may wish to do so.



(continued on page 14)

Treasurer's Report
South Yorkshire & NE Derbyshire Ramblers Balance Sheet
October 1st 2024 to September 30th 2025

	NOTES	2025 ££	2024 ££
Fixed Assets			
Current Assets			
Unity Trust Current Acc			
Opening Statement Balance		19,933	28,969
Plus Receipts		5,063	6,987
Less Payments		10,705	16,023
Closing Statement Balance		14,291	19,933
Plus Outstanding Receipts			
Less Outstanding Payments			
Net Current Assets		14,291	19,933
Cash held by Treasurer			
Represented by:-			
Unrestricted Funds			
Accumulative General Reserve	1	8,634	8,631
Restricted Funds			
Bradfield Ancient Ways Initiative (BAWI)	2	4,944	9,989
Clarion Call Account	3	1,313	1,313
		6,257	11,302
TOTAL		14,291	19,933

1 Undistributed Accumulated General Reserve	2025 ££	2024 ££
Balance Brought Forward	8,631	14,167
Plus Receipts	5,063	6,987
Plus Receipts (Int)	0	0
Less Payments	5,660	12,523
BALANCE	8,034	8,631
2 Undistributed Restricted (BAWI)		
Balance Brought Forward	9,989	9,989
Plus Receipts	0	0
Less Payments	5,045	0
BALANCE	4,944	9,989
3 Restricted Clarion Call Account		
Balance Brought Forward	1,313	4,813
Plus Receipts	0	0
Less Payments	0	3,500
BALANCE	1,313	1,313

**South Yorkshire and N E Derbyshire Area Ramblers
Finance Report for year ending 30 September 2025.**

The Area has received 3 of its 4 quarterly payments from CO but distributed less than planned to Groups. During the year the Area received £5,063 from Central Office and distributed £4,967 to Groups in the Area.

The Area spent approx. £692 during the year on administering the Area, including the purchase of a Zoom Licence and for the production and distribution of the Area's Annual Report.

We allocated £6,795 from the Ivy Cowen Trust Legacy Fund to the 10-year Ivy Cowen project to support the Area and Groups to meet the Ramblers charitable objective. We spent £0 from the funds this year.

No Clarion Call books were sold this year and we currently have £1,313 left to distribute.

We are considering using this money towards the cost of a Plaque at Sheffield Station commemorating GHB Ward & the Clarion Ramblers.

We donated £5,046 from the Bradfield Ancient Ways Initiative (BAWI) account to the Steel Valley project for their footpath improvement work to leave a balance of £4,944 for Phase 3 of the project.

The Groups asked the Area for approx. £6,743 funding for the coming year.

We will be contributing £1,493 from our own funds in line with the Rambler's Reserve policy towards our budget of £8,243 and will therefore be asking Central Office for £6,750.

Our thanks are due to our independent examiner. Lorraine Watson.

Gavin Johns, SYNED Area Treasurer

"I certify that the above balance sheet and the following income and expenditure accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Ramblers Association guidance. They reflect the transactions of the SYNED Area during the financial year and the state of affairs at September 30th 2025. That records have been properly kept and payments authorised by the Area Committee during the year to September 30th 2025."

Lorraine Watson, Independent Examiner

(Doncaster Group cont) Our Statement, with suggestions from Area Chair, reads:
"Ramblers recognises the need to protect the countryside. However it also recognises that protecting the countryside is a complex matter, with short term and long term issues relating to sustainability, getting the right balance between aesthetics and the long term need for energy, between biodiversity and farming, between nature and the needs of residents. Given the complexities of these issues, and that so much depends on the details of developments, and the varied opinions of Ramblers members, Ramblers groups, areas and the whole organisation, will not take a position. If individual members want to support or oppose a development, that is of course their choice."

Our membership figures remain very healthy, with 258 members at the end of August. This is an 11.2% increase in the last two years. The Thursday walks programme continues to provide new members, as did a one-off local history walk on Sunday, 14th September - promoted to the local population - when one walker became a member of Ramblers during the course of the walk.

The walks programme continues to be well-promoted, with many photos from walks, and a written report being posted on our website. Our publicity officer then posts the photos and report on our Facebook site and sends them to many local magazines.

I end by thanking everyone who has contributed to the success of Doncaster Ramblers.

I thank everyone involved in the walks programme, especially to leaders who take on the responsibility of leading the walk, to back-markers, to photographers and report writers who help to publicise the group. Also my thanks to the vitally important walks coordinators for the Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday programmes.

And finally my thanks to the committee members, who give up their time to attend meetings and contribute to the decisions we make. I noted at the last AGM that we were losing three very experienced committee members. It is to the credit of the 2025 committee that those experienced members have not been missed!

David Gadd Chair,
Doncaster Ramblers



Dearne Valley Ramblers

Dearne Valley Ramblers are happy to report another successful year of walking and social events.

Our membership remains stable at around 155 members, around half of whom walk with us regularly. We are lucky to have a team of well organised walk leaders who continue to provide varied and scenic routes, some steeped in history, with around 100 walks offered over the last 12 months.



Our committee (especially our social secretary, Pat White) and walk leaders have also jointly organised some lovely social events this year, all well attended. Highlights include a coach trip to Ilkley with a wonderful walk over Ilkley Moor, a summer walk and potluck picnic hosted at Rowms Lane Social Club, another coach trip to Lincoln, and not forgetting our annual Christmas party with games, raffle, quiz, and buffet! Bob continues to collate and produce our six-monthly newsletter full of colour, varied content and photography which is always well received by our members.



In April, 19 members attended a map reading course led by our resident geographer, John, and finally, what must be the highlight of the year, was the fabulous weekend in the Lakes in October organised by 4 of our well-established walk leaders: Bob, Clive, Sarah & Brenda. Each day two walks of varying length were on offer, both with spectacular views. This was so popular that another holiday has already been arranged for next year!

All the above could not be enjoyed without the support and dedication of all our volunteers and members, thanks to you all. Also, a big thanks to the outgoing members of our committee, and thanks to the volunteers that have stepped forward to take on the vacant committee roles.

Pat Chesney
DVR Chair



Rotherham Metro Ramblers

I am happy to report on another year of well attended walks, averaging over 20 people per walk throughout the year. Many thanks go to all our walk leaders who have invested much time and effort to bring our group a full and varied walks program.

I am also very pleased to report that we have a full program for 2026, and that we have managed to recruit four new walk leaders.

This has been one of the most difficult issues of the year, following some of the directives from Head Office. Let us hope that the next time Head Office want to implement a new strategy they adopt a "hearts and minds" approach, rather than the dictatorial approach of recent months.

So, once again, many thanks to all those people who have committed to lead walks in the forthcoming year.

The basis behind any successful group is a strong and active committee. I would like to thank each and everyone member of the Committee for their tireless efforts this year. The group is indebted to you all.

We continue to support the Sight and Sound Walking Group. I know that the walks are greatly appreciated by the participants.

We have strong ties with RMBC, and continue our fortnightly Footpath Days throughout the borough, mending gates, stiles, steps, cutting back vegetation, planting new trees and litter picking. A lot of work has been done by our group this year.

I am sad to report that two of our long standing walkers, Jim Tompkin and Ernest Wright, passed away this year.

Both of these gentlemen were great walkers and great characters.

At the time of writing our Group is looking forward to a walking holiday in Scarborough. Let us hope that the weather continues to hold.

I believe the next big issue facing the Group is the Whitestone Solar Farm project, which is set to dominate the countryside in our area. Whilst appreciating that this source of energy is urgently needed, the total decimation of the local countryside cannot go unchallenged. I am sure that there will be a lot of debate and discussion on this subject in the coming year.

We shall be hosting the Area AGM this year and will be welcoming our fellow Area members to our patch, hopefully many will join us for the morning walk of about 5 miles along the Stag-Wickersley Circular prior to the meeting in the afternoon.

Lastly I would like to wish all Ramblers a Very Happy Christmas and plenty of safe, pleasant walking in the New Year.

Ivor Wilson, RMR Chair

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/rotherham-metro>

Sheffield Ramblers

2025 has been a transitional year for Sheffield Ramblers as our long standing Secretary – one Malcom Dixon! – stood down and was replaced by joint chairs.

Our membership ended the year where it began at a stable number and our walking programme continued with very few gaps throughout the year. Our coach rambles continue to be popular taking members on magical mystery tours to far flung parts – well, at least no more than two and a half hours from Sheffield!



We continue to make efforts to raise our profile with increased publicity through traditional means such as printed leaflet and more recent innovations such as social media.

Transport has been on regular theme for us over the year as our commitment to making all our walks reachable by public transport being tested by an increasingly erratic bus network.

We have also continued to focus on public access issues working in partnership with other walking groups in the area keeping a beady eye in particular on where new housing developments have curtailed or restricted access to public paths.

Our 2025 AGM set out our key objectives for the coming year as being:

- Maintaining a walking programme for our members
- Increasing our membership
- Working in support of Ramblers campaigns both locally and nationally
- Working through groups like the Area Council with other Ramblers groups.

Which, of course, highlights the need for the current national governance review to listen to members and not take away vital opportunities for members to work collectively in the best interests of the Association.

Adrian Roxan, Chair, Sheffield Ramblers



Sheffield 20's-30's Walking Group

REVIEW OF 2025 - What have we been upto?

WALKING

132 walks

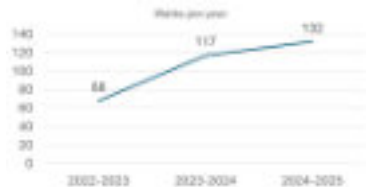
3 Pub and Plan sessions (34 attendees)

Night Hike

Fancy Dress Walk

Sheffield Country Walk Challenge

A new challenge for next year?



WEEKENDS AWAY

Sheen, White Peak District – March

Dolgellau, Wales – April

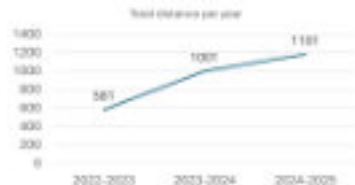
Ninebanks, Northumberland – May

Nidderdale, Yorkshire Dales – July

Isle of Man – September

Ennerdale, Lake District – September

Robin Hoods Bay, North Yorkshire Moors – November



SAFETY AND TRAINING

10 new walk leaders who have led at least 1 walk (compared to 9 last year)

1 Map Reading social

2 Learn to Lead sessions

1 First Aid training

SOCIALS

Monthly Socials at the Old Shoe

Christmas Party

Summer Party

Wine and Cheese Picnic

Hathersage Outdoor Pool

Pub Hunt

And many others



FINANCES

Strong position, all weekends away well attended

Sufficient funds for Weekend Away booking deposits

Requested additional funding for First Aid Training and Equipment

Possible threat...National Ramblers may be less favourable with funds (currently request funds through "Area")

PUBLICITY AND MEMBERSHIP STATS

Radio Sheffield Interview

Members only Meetup

New members socials

Walk leader competitions

301 Members, up from 238 last year



Ramblers Access Report

Recent documents from the Government are recommending expanding access to inland waters, Woodlands and other suitable natural environments, and also improving existing access. They are to establish an Access to Nature investment Strategy, enabling local highways authorities to apply for resources to remove barriers, so better access is achieved.

When consultations and conversation are started, we will have to be ready to identify areas and routes suitable for this possible increase in access to inland waters and Woodlands.

Local Access difficulties have been minimal this last year considering the hot dry season. Moorlands have not been subject to fire closures which was good. The usual Moorland management closures have applied, but short notice of such closures have resulted in re routing some prearranged walks.

Movement to opening up access woodlands in the Oughtibridge area is now making good progress. Agreement between Forest England and The Yorkshire Water Authority, will result in pedestrian access been achieved.

Thanks to the persistence of local residents, the Upper Don Trail members and other dedicated ramblers, we are hopeful by this Winter this woodland will be accessible.

Thanks to all our fellow Ramblers for support in keeping our moorlands and countryside open.

Les Seaman Access Officer, Good Roaming

The first step to becoming a walk leader is to contact your local Ramblers Group - they'll make you most welcome JOIN US NOW

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/walk-leadership>
and download a copy of 'The Walk Leader's Handbook'

Sheffield 40's Walking Group

Sheffield 40s continues its success, securing another year of operation and celebrating our 18th birthday in November 2025.

The group maintains a stable membership of 300-320, welcoming a steady flow of new walkers to both walks and social events.

We hosted **160 walks** between the AGMs, supported by **29 active walk leaders** (including three new ones). Walk leader training is strong, with 31 members already completing the Ramblers' course before the end of November, and more expected by Christmas.

The year averaged **one social event per month**, including popular weekends away to the North York Moors and the Shropshire Hills, with eight members contributing to the organization.

Behind the scenes, the committee has been active: we are developing a **new website** with features like a walk template form and start location maps, and we have been diligent in **reporting footpath issues**. We also organized three training events focusing on OS apps, navigation, and First Aid.

Our main expenditure was the refunding of walk recce costs.

The 2025 AGM saw significant committee changes, with **Liz, Christine, Vicki, Charlie, and Helen** stepping down from the roles of Chair, Secretary, Social Secretary, Treasurer, and Training Officer. While new volunteers have filled all but the **Social Secretary** position, this role currently remains vacant.



The new bridge at Cressbrook Mill
SYNED Ramblers donated £5,000
towards the £190,000 total raised.



Area Membership 2024/2025

Year end	CNED	Done	Sheff	Rothm	B&P	DVR	Sheff 20	Sheff 40	NOT allocated	SYNED total	National Total
2015	473	230	614	286	180	105	231	230	0	2329	106452
2016	439	224	590	259	167	114	258	233	0	2284	105234
2017	424	204	580	246	152	117	233	240	0	2198	104517
2018	410	236	564	251	154	147	225	250	0	2237	102023
2019	371	224	522	238	144	151	210	239	73	2172	102151
2020	353	228	507	229	135	150	167	251	44	2064	96717
2021	363	231	505	212	143	142	157	268	52	2073	101130
2022	398	222	480	203	152	132	199	282	70	2116	102144
2023	365	235	475	214	150	166	186	311	91	2183	103727
2024	354	249	453	203	155	154	243	314	129	2254	105693
2025											
January	358	247	458	201	152	152	250	320	127	2265	106253
February	348	248	457	197	148	154	258	318	124	2252	106707
March	346	249	455	198	147	153	269	323	129	2269	107295
April	336	254	447	199	150	154	290	323	139	2289	107855
May	326	249	442	196	152	156	290	319	134	2268	107804
June	321	254	442	196	151	156	297	317	131	2265	107874
July	324	258	456	228	164	159	297	318	136	2340	108270
August	318	258	455	226	164	161	306	311	147	2348	108387
September	316	253	454	223	161	160	301	311	147	2326	107695

Affiliated Organisations

Affiliated Organisations

We are grateful for the support of these Walking Groups who have affiliated to the Ramblers:-

Halcyon Walking Club
Peak Walking Group
Sheffield CHA Rambling Club
The Rotherham Rambling Club
Todwick Ramblers Club

SYNED Area Ramblers

are affiliated to the following like-minded organisations:-

CPRE - Campaign for the Protection
of Rural England -
the Countryside Charity
<https://www.cpre.org.uk>
PNFS - Peak & Northern Footpaths
Society
<http://www.pnfs.org.uk/>
Peak District Green Lanes Alliance
OSS - The Open Spaces Society
<https://www.oss.org.uk/>

from the :- The Ramblers Refreshed Strategic Plan

"We believe we must sharpen our focus on our charitable purpose by bringing our unique public benefits to those with the least access and the most barriers to walking outdoors in nature."

"This means that as well as providing more opportunities for walking we will recognise the specific circumstances of different people and communities, and tailor our support to overcome the barriers that prevent their participation."



RAMBLERS

**South Yorks &
N.E. Derbyshire**

My thanks to everyone who has contributed to this SYNED Area Annual Report.
Visit our website: **www.synedramblers.org.uk** for more information
with links to our 8 local Ramblers Groups and their walks programmes

This Report compiled using 'Affinity 3 by Canva' DTP software
Printed by A&R Tradeprint, 515 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield S7 1FU

www.arttradeprint.co.uk