NORTH EAST LONDON GROUP OF THE RAMBLERS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

Time: Monday 23 November 2026 at 7pm
Venue: The Cabin, St. Margarets House, 21 Old Ford Rd, London E2 9PL

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introduction from the Chair (Joanne)
2. Apologies for Absence (Carrie)
3. Agree Draft Minutes of the 2025 AGM (Carrie)
4. Matters Arising from the 2025 AGM Minutes (Carrie)
5. Annual Reports for 2025-26
    (a) Chair
    (b) Secretary
    (c) Membership Secretary
    (d) Treasurer
    (e) Walks Organiser
    (f) Website Manager
    (g) London Area Representatives
6. Election of Honorary Officers
    (a) Chair
    (b) Secretary
    (c) Membership Secretary
    (d) Treasurer
    (e) Walks Organiser
    (f) London Area Representatives
    (g) Website Manager
    (h) Footpath Officer
    (i) Publicity and Campaigns Officer
    (j) Independent Examiner of the Accounts
7. Approval of change to NELR expenses policy
8. Format of next AGM – propose a meeting/walk (Laura)
9. Any Other Business
10. Date of Next AGM – November 2026 (Carrie)

Item 1 Welcome and Introduction from the Chair (Joanne)

Item 2 Apologies for Absence (Carrie)

Item 3 Agree draft minutes of the 2025 AGM (Carrie)

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE NORTH EAST LONDON GROUP OF THE RAMBLERS HELD ON MONDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2025

Present

Susan Teece (Chair), Annette Warrick (Secretary), Anna O'Sullivan (Membership Secretary),

Laura Jacobs (Walks Organiser), Garry Gerrish (London Area Rep), Carrie Thompson (London

Area Rep), Joanne Dixon, David Pennington, Keith Evans, Susan Murray, Denise Bertuchi, Tim

Sai-Louie (Observer & Chair of Inner London Area)

1. Welcome and Introduction from the Chair

Susan welcomed attendees to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Apologies for Absence

Alan Lazarus, Suzanne Easton, Lucy Robinson and Valerie Meixner

3. Draft Minutes of the 2024 AGM

Agreed as accurate.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The actions from the 2024 minutes were cleared.

5. Annual Reports for 2024-25

a) **Chair**

Susan thanked everyone for their work, including getting the Group used to the new website. She advised that she would not be standing for re-election.

b) **Secretary**

Annette provided a written report and she was thanked for her draft letter to Ramblers. She advised that she would not be standing for re-election.

c) **Membership Secretary**

Anna provided a written report. It was noted that membership has been stable.

d) **Treasurer**

Alan provided accounts and a written report, which were approved. He sent a note which highlighted that the £500 website charge is exceptional and that there will be no such expenditure in future years, as the Ramblers' server and support is free. Main costs in 2025-26 should be for the AGM and walkover expenses. The £10 received from Ramblers Holidays Walking Partnership was welcomed. The need to monitor walkover expenses was noted, as they have doubled. Garry advised that there is no pattern and walkover expense claims have fluctuated.

e) **Walks Organiser**

Laura provided a written report. She advised that all walks leaders are encouraged to publish their own walks on Walks Manager. With her support where needed, nearly all our

active walks leaders have either completed the Ramblers' online training or certified they led 12 walks in the past 3years. This proactive approach is reflected in our re-registration statistics – 66% complete compared with an average of 33% for groups in Inner London.

It was agreed that the walks leaders' meeting was very useful and Laura will consider organising another in 2026.

f) **Website Manager**

Annette submitted a written report. She took on the role as nobody else came forward, but has enjoyed it. She prepared the new website for the transfer on 1 January 2025. Since then she has added more information and set up the Google Group. She was unable to find anyone to take over the role, or to be a deputy, so she sent the Committee a guidance note, in case she becomes incapacitated. She was thanked for the useful information that has been added to the website.

g) **London Area Representatives**

Garry and Carrie submitted a written report. Garry apologised for attending only one meeting in the past year and he planned to do better in 2025-26. The number of Ramblers members not allocated to any group is growing and it represents the largest group in Inner London. This is of concern, because it reduces the funding for groups and the pool of members who may be interested in leading walks.

6. Election of Honorary Officers

The following officers were proposed, seconded and elected unopposed:

Chair: Joanne Dixon (proposed Laura, seconded Susan Murray)

Secretary: Carrie Thompson (proposed Annette, seconded Keith)

Membership Secretary: Anna O'Sullivan (proposed Annette, seconded Denise)

Treasurer: Alan Lazarus (proposed Susan Murray, seconded Carrie)

Walks Organiser: Laura Jacobs (proposed Garry, seconded Denise)

Website Content Manager: Annette Warrick (proposed Carrie Garry)

London Area Rep: Garry Gerrish (proposed Annette, seconded Joanne)

Deputy London Area Rep: Carrie Thompson (proposed Annette, seconded Joanne)

Footpath Officer and Publicity/Campaigns Officer posts are vacant, though Garry will cover any footpath issues and publicity will be via the website.

Independent Examiner of accounts: Garry Gerrish (proposed Laura, seconded Susan Murray).

7. Booking Pub Lunches

Laura suggested that there should not be a policy requiring walk leaders to book a pub lunch but that we should be flexible in our approach. She observed that the walk leader is best placed to organise a pub lunch on their walk, but that others could do so, using the Add an Event option on Walks Manager. Annette said she had organised a pub lunch using Add an Event, though she had to obtain information on timing and participants from the walk leader. The approach had worked and they had finished lunch in good time. It was agreed that, if a pub is available at lunchtime, it is up to the walk leader to decide whether or not to organise a lunch, but the pub should be mentioned in the walk

description.

8. Any Other Business

Keith offered to look into organising a weekend away, maybe in Salisbury. Garry advised that accommodation can be costly, but CLOG had found that university accommodation is good value. Annette mentioned a pleasant stay at Jesus College, Cambridge last summer.

Tim advised that participants could organise their own accommodation and meet-up in the evening, or use HF, Ramblers Holidays or youth hostels. Agreed that Keith will explore options for the Committee.

Garry raised a concern that there appears to be no Ramblers' guidance on what to do if a walk leader falls ill. This happened on a walk that he attended with another group.

10. Date of Next AGM

Monday 23 November 2026 was provisionally agreed, venue to be advised.

Item 4 Matters Arising from the 2025 AGM Minutes (Carrie)

Item 5 Annual Reports for 2025-26

a) Chair (Joanne)

I am grateful to all officers, walk leaders and members of North East London Ramblers for their contributions to what has been a very successful year. We have had a full programme of varied and enjoyable walks, thanks to Laura's tireless efforts and the willingness and flexibility of walk leaders. In June, Annette, Anna and I attended the Inner London Committee walk and pub social. It was very interesting to chat to committee members from other groups.

In September, Denise hosted a walk leaders meeting and social that was both useful and good fun.

In October, Susan Murray arranged a very pleasant evening at a Turkish restaurant.

Annette has put a huge amount of work into the new booking-system, which provides a useful option for leaders who wish to require bookings for their walks.

b) Secretary (Carrie)

This is my first year as Secretary. My main responsibility has been organising the November 2026 AGM, including booking the venue and gathering the reports required for the AGM papers.

I would like to thank everyone who has provided information and reports to help with the preparation of the meeting and I look forward to continuing in the role and supporting the organisation in the year ahead.

c) Membership Secretary (Anna)

Numbers have gone down and I am not sure why, maybe it could have been due to the hot weather.

I have continued to be able to answer and solve queries received from possible members.

I have also received, from The Ramblers, a certification for having successfully completed the course: "Data Protection - how to look after data"

I am willing to continue as Membership Secretary for another year, unless someone else wants to do it.

Membership Numbers for North East London Ramblers 2025/26

Year:	Month:	Numbers:	Joined:	Left:
2025	October	396	6	7
2025	November	394	5	7
2025	December	394	5	5
2026	January	398	8	4
2026	February	398	3	2
2026	March	400	7	5
2026	April	399	6	7
2026	May	400	9	8
2026	June	390	4	6
2026	July	385	5	10
2026	August	383	5	7
2026	September	381	6	7

d) Treasurer (Alan)

Our Annual Accounts for the financial year 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2026 are attached for your acceptance. These have been approved by our Independent Examiner and sent to the Treasurer of Inner London Area Ramblers.

The Executive agreed we would only ask for 50% of our allocation from Head Office for 2025-26 i.e. £267.25 and we still returned a small profit of £48.56 leaving our reserves at £644.81.

For 2026-27, the Executive asked that we take our full funding allocation, potentially spending more on walkover expenses, walks leader meetings, and first aid training/equipment.

Ramblers' Association: North East London Group
Accounts 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2026

2024/25 £		2025/26 £
	Income	
486.14	London Area RA allocation[1]	267.25
10.00	Credit from Ramblers Holidays	20.00
£496.14	**Total Income**	**£287.25**
	Expenditure	
	NELR website	
500.00	– Hosting and maintenance of website – Transfer to Ramblers platform	0.00
	Annual General Meeting:	
30.00 16.00	– Room hire – Copying papers	40.00 18.00
174.75	Walkover expenses	122.45
0.00	Walks Leader meeting expenses	58.24
£720.75	**Total Expenditure**	**£238.69**
£(224.61)	**Balance of Income over Expenditure**	**£48.56**

2024/25 £	**Cash in Bank Reconciliation @ 30 September 2026**	2025/26 £
820.86	Surplus/deficit brought forward from previous year	596.25
(224.61)	Surplus/deficit current year	48.56
£596.25	**Cash in bank at year-end**	**£644.81**

1 Given our cash position at 30 September 2025, we decided to only accept 50% of our basic allocation of funding from London Area for 2025/26 i.e. £267.26. We will be asking for our full allocation for 2026/27 in anticipation of increased walkover expenses and first aid training.

e) Walks Organiser (Laura)

Thank you to all our walk leaders for giving us some wonderful days out. Your efforts are hugely appreciated.

Saturday walks: We have been able to offer a walk every Saturday. On August 29 we provided an extra walk as an easier alternative to a more strenuous one.

Joint walk with London Blind Ramblers group: For the third year running Lucy Robinson has led a summer walk for London Blind Ramblers group with NELR members providing sighted assistance. This year's enjoyable walk in Epping Forest was held on Sunday 5 July with plenty of NELR members taking part.

The first Wednesday of the month walk: In November 2025 we completed the Capital Ring. From December to March, we walked the Green Link from Epping Forest to Peckham. We began the London Loop in April 2026.

Wednesday Coffee and Stroll: Annette Warrick devises and leads these companionable and leisurely monthly walks mainly in the North East London area. They always begin with coffee at an independent café. The walks are around 5 miles in length with drop out options and are much appreciated.

Walk leaders Meeting: I would like to thank Denise Bertuchi for generously hosting our informal walk leaders meeting and social on 1 September 2026. I am happy to organise another one in 2027 if the demand is there.

Finally, I would be more than happy to hear from members thinking about leading, and invite anyone interested to get in touch with me. I can put you in touch with other leaders who along with myself could suggest routes, help with the walkover and offer support on the day of the walk.

f) Website Manager (Annette)

During the past year I have kept the website maintained and I updated it as necessary. This included daily checking, installing software updates, running backups and checking content. There have been no occasions when the website has been offline.

I have been spending considerable time over several months working with a volunteer on the technical support team and others, to develop a booking system for Ramblers' groups. It was introduced to NELR walks leaders at a meeting on 1 September and then made available for the group to try out. Three walks leaders tried it on walks and several NELR members registered to use it. Others have booked as guests. I invited feedback and we identified issues where we wish to have adjustments, mainly relating to the

communications functions. I provided a detailed feedback note to the technical volunteer.

It has been useful to influence the development of the booking system, ensuring that it meets our needs and is flexible enough to suit different ways of organising walks across all Ramblers' groups. Thanks to everyone who has registered and tried out the new system, and for giving feedback.

g) London Area Representatives (Garry and Carrie)

In 2026 there were five meetings of the Inner London Group of which three were attended by either Carrie or Garry or both. The meetings in the year were attended by between 10 to 14 representatives from the Inner London walking groups and Area officials, such as the Chair (Tim Sai-Louie). All meetings bar one were held at a venue close to Angel Underground Station and due to a tube strike one meeting was held online.

Issues covered in the year included the Inner London members not allocated to groups and a plan to reallocate to groups towards the end of 2026-27, a consultation on governance changes and reporting on finances which are healthy across the Inner London area. The Inner London Area Ramble for committee members from the individual groups within the area was on June 9th this year.

The latest quarterly statistics provided for the period to August 2026 indicate that membership in Inner London as a whole over the latest 12 months has grown by 5.7% to 6,171. There was continuation in the trend for a significant number of new members not to be affiliated to groups (847 in September 2025 to 1073 in August 2026). The Area has a total budget of £13,836 in 2025/26. Between years this figure is volatile but is virtually the same as in 2021/22 despite inflation across this period.

The NELR report submitted to the AGM will report:

- The North East London Group has continued to provide a mix of weekly walks throughout the year.
- This includes a walk on every Saturday, along with a monthly programme of shorter walks on Wednesday and in 2025 and 2026 we have been completing the Capital Ring and London Loop.
- We continue to upgrade our IT system which includes a legacy site, with for example a record of over 20 years of our walks.

Item 6 Election of Honorary Officers

a) Chair
b) Secretary
c) Membership Secretary
d) Treasurer
e) Walks Organiser
f) Website Manager
g) London Area Representatives
h) Footpath Officer
i) Publicity and Campaigns Officer
j) Independent Examiner of the Accounts

Item 7 Approval of change to NELR expenses policy

Ramblers Association: North East London Group

Guidelines for claiming out-of-pocket expenses

In order that members should not be discouraged from leading walks because of lack of funds, it has previously been agreed that leaders of programmed walks should be able to claim out-of-pocket expenses **for walkovers only** and that those hosting planning meetings could claim back reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for providing refreshments). This note updates our existing guidelines

1) A contribution to out-of-pocket expenses for **walkovers** may be claimed for the group's programmed walks as follows:

- Train or bus fares from London for one walkover per programmed walk, for up to two people (should be claimed by each person), unless there are exceptional unexpected circumstances such as train cancellations, very severe weather etc.

2) The reimbursement of taxi fares incurred by walks leaders may be claimed where taxis are needed in exceptional circumstances e.g., where train cancellations would otherwise mean a walk would have to be abandoned. Claimants should also seek reimbursement from the rail company responsible with a view to reimbursing NELR with any amount received.

3) A contribution to out-of-pocket costs of **hosting walks leaders/walks planning meetings** may be claimed as follows:

- Claims should mainly be for food and soft drinks, though the provision of paper plates/plastic cups is also acceptable

- The cost of alcoholic drinks will not be reimbursed – those attending should be asked to bring their own

- A maximum of £60 will be reimbursed, whatever the size of the claim

All claims must be submitted to the Treasurer (currently Alan Lazarus alanpaula@btinternet.com), **within one month** of being incurred, using the expenses claim form, together with supporting tickets/receipts for the whole amount.

Alan Lazarus
Treasurer
August 2026

Item 8 Format of next AGM – propose a meeting/walk (Laura & Carrie)

Background and Proposal

The proposal to include a group walk before the next AGM has been discussed with Carrie, the Secretary, and other members of the group over recent months.

A number of other Ramblers groups already adopt this approach, combining their AGM with a walk and social gathering. We believe this could be a positive way to encourage more members to attend the AGM and to encourage non-members to join and take a greater interest in the group.

Possible Formats

Here are some examples of what other Inner London groups have done or are doing for their 2026 AGM.

Southbank: Saturday 14 November, 2 walks one 6 miles, the other 4.5 miles both ending at a Herne Hill church at 13.15. Tea, coffee, fruit and cake provided. Walkers eat their own packed lunch. AGM at 14.15. All welcome on the walks and to lunch in the AGM venue. The AGM is for Southbank members only.

Hampstead: Sunday 15 November, walk in Regents Park to a community centre in Camden. Wine and buffet provided. AGM at 14.00. followed by a talk by walker/author /artist Stephen Passmore. Not clear if the walk and lunch is open to non-members. Hampstead group walks normally take place on Sunday.

Capital: Monday 30 November, all welcome to join a short walk at 18.00 pm from Angel to a pub in Smithfield for the AGM.

Strollers: 12 December (Saturday) for a 6-mile walk. Limited to 30 people booking is required. The walk ends at 13.00 with lunch in the Russell Square area followed by the AGM at a nearby venue.

Potential Benefits

Combining a walk with the AGM could make the occasion more sociable and appealing, giving members an additional reason to attend. It would also provide an opportunity for members to meet one another, exchange ideas and become more involved in the group's activities and future.

Members could be given the option of joining the walk, attending the AGM, or taking part in both. Non-members might be invited to the event and hopefully join the group. Non-members would not participate in the AGM.

Recommendation

It is proposed that the committee considers including a walk as part of the next AGM programme and agrees on a suitable format and if non-members would be welcome to join the walk. The secretary would then explore potential venues with the approval of the treasurer and the walks organiser would arrange a walk.

The aim is to make the AGM a more welcoming and enjoyable occasion, encourage greater attendance and strengthen member involvement in the group.

Item 9 Any Other Business

Item 10 Date of Next AGM (Carrie)
To be confirmed after discussion on Item 8 – October/November 2027