

RAILWAY RAMBLERS' CONSTITUTION

1. The association shall be known as "Railway Ramblers", and shall hereinafter in this Constitution be referred to as "The Club".
2. The General Aims of the Club shall be:
 - i. To encourage the discovery, exploration and description of disused railway lines, walking over them where possible;
 - ii. To alert the appropriate authorities to lines considered suitable for conversion to public paths, and to encourage the clearance, signposting and maintenance of such paths;
 - iii. To bring together members of the Club in various parts of the country to explore disused lines and to keep all members informed of programmes and developments.

The current Detailed Aims of the Club - which are not part of this Constitution - are laid out in an appendix hereunder (i.e. as at the back of *Railway Ramblings*).

3. There shall be three classes of membership of the Club: to be known as Household Membership, Overseas Membership and Group Membership respectively. The Household Rate (HR) should be used as the basis for the Club's subscription rates. Overseas Rate should be 1.5 times the HR and Group Rate should be 3 times the HR
4. The Club shall be managed by a Committee, which shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, one or more Editors of the Club Magazine, Distribution Officer, Information Officer, and Webmaster responsible for maintaining the club's website. It shall be possible for one person to hold more than one of these offices simultaneously, with the approval of the Annual General Meeting; provided that the total number of Committee members does not fall below five.

The aforementioned officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting each year and, subject to termination of office by resignation or otherwise, shall remain in office until their successors are elected at the Annual General Meeting next following their election.

The Committee shall have the power to fill any casual vacancy by co-option; and also to co-opt additional members for specific purposes.

Retiring members of the Committee shall be eligible for immediate re-election.

5. Any member wishing to withdraw from membership of the Club may do so upon notifying the Membership Secretary in writing. The membership of any member shall lapse, if his/her annual subscription remains unpaid one calendar month after notification of subscription due and a reminder thereof have been sent by ordinary post to the member's last known address.
6. The Club shall maintain a separate Footpath Fund, from which shall be disbursed monies to advance the efforts of bodies or projects involved in the conversion of disused railway lines into public paths. Grants from this Fund shall be made only to conversions which:
 - i. Are long term or permanent;
 - ii. Use disused railways for walking or cycling by the public; and

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- iii. Obtain publicity for the club in the form of acknowledgement on leaflets or signs, etc.

The Footpath Fund shall be maintained by monies specifically donated to it. Up to two hundred and fifty pounds (£250) annually may be disbursed at the discretion of the Committee. Disbursement of sums above £250 per annum shall be decided on by an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting.

7. The Committee shall have the following powers:
 - i. Management of the funds raised from annual subscriptions and other sources, and, as delineated above, of the Footpath Fund; and of the general affairs of the Club. The Committee's decisions shall be binding on members;
 - ii. To make rules for the regulation and conduct of the Club, provided that these are not inconsistent with this Constitution; similarly to define the Detailed Aims of the Club. Such rules and Detailed Aims shall be notified to members individually;
 - iii. To create such sub-committees as it shall consider desirable; provided that at least one member of each sub-committee shall also be a member of the Committee;
 - iv. To vet the proposed membership of any person, and to suspend or expel and not to renew the membership of any member. Reasons for suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to : (a) Bringing the Club into disrepute; (b) Inappropriate conduct towards fellow members; (c) Using Club resources , including members' or landowners' personal data, in an inappropriate manner; (d) Committing the Club to financial expenditure without prior authorisation by the Committee; and (e) Failing to provide reasonable justification for expenses when requested to do so. All complaints and allegations of impropriety must be advised to the Secretary or Chairman, who will inform other members of the Committee. Any member who is suspended or expelled shall have the right of a personal appeal to and hearing by the Annual General Meeting, whose decision shall be final;
 - v. To delineate the Area structure of the Club; and to appoint Area Organisers, after due consultation with members in the appropriate Areas;
 - vi. To consider all complaints, suggestions, matters of concern etc. submitted by members; such matters are to be directed to the Committee through the Chairman or the Secretary.

8. A General Meeting of the Club shall be held once a year on **the Saturday falling between the 16th and 22nd of May**, to transact the following business:
 - i. To receive and, if approved, adopt a statement of the Club's accounts for the preceding year, ending 31 December; to disburse monies from the Footpath Fund, if appropriate; and to fix the annual subscription to the Club for the following year;
 - ii. To consider and, if approved, sanction any duly proposed alteration to the Constitution;
 - iii. To appoint the Officers of the Club;
 - iv. To appoint any Honorary Officers of the Club, e.g. President, Vice-President; such Honorary Officers shall have no standing in the conduct of the Club; however, they shall receive complimentary copies of all generally distributed Club publications and notices;
 - v. To appoint an Independent Accounts Examiner of the Club's accounts;
 - vi. To hear and decide upon appeals against disciplinary action by the Committee;

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- vii. To deal with any relevant matters which the Committee or members may desire to bring to the attention of the Club.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to members not less than twenty one days before the Meeting, and shall specify the matters to be dealt with. **The venue of the AGM should be an accessible location served by the National Rail Network**

9. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened at any time by the Committee, or shall be convened by them within one calendar month of a requisition in writing signed by not fewer than ten members, specifying their reason for calling the Meeting.

Such an Extraordinary General Meeting shall have only the following powers:

- i. To consider and, if approved, sanction any duly proposed alteration to the Constitution;
- ii. To deal with any special matter which the Committee or members may desire to put before the Club;
- iii. To receive the resignation of any of the Officers or members of the Committee, or to remove any member or members thereof from office; and to fill any vacancy or vacancies caused thereby.

Notice convening an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be sent to members not less than one calendar month before the Meeting, and shall specify the matters to be dealt with.

10. The Chairman of the Committee (or, in the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, or person appointed by that Meeting, in that order of precedence) shall take the chair at Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings; and voting shall, unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution, be by a simple majority. The Chairman, or Acting-Chairman, shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote at all meetings; but no proxy or postal votes shall be admissible.
11. Minutes of the Club's meetings shall be kept; and the minutes of all Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings shall at all times be open to inspection by any member of the Club.
12. Any dispute as to the interpretation of the Club's Constitution or rules shall be adjudicated by the Chairman, or Acting-Chairman, whose decision shall be final.
13. Any resolution amending this Constitution shall not be effective unless approved at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club by not less than two thirds of those members present and voting. At all Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings a quorum shall comprise at least ten members present and voting; and at all meetings of the Committee shall comprise at least four members present and voting.
14. A resolution calling for the winding up of the Club shall not be made otherwise than at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club; and such resolution shall not be effective unless approved by a majority of not less than two thirds of those members present and voting.

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In the event of the winding up or dissolution of the Club, its property and assets shall be distributed equally amongst the members, at the discretion of the appropriate Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting. Should the net assets in the General Fund fall below last year's expenditure for a period of three calendar months, the Committee shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss the future and possible dissolution of the Club. All liabilities at the dissolution of the Club shall be shared equally among the members of the Club.

15. No member in any circumstances shall use the title "Railway Ramblers" otherwise than with the express permission of the Committee.
16. Young people under the age of sixteen may take part in Club activities, provided that a responsible adult, such as a parent or guardian, accompanies them at all times to supervise their safety and behaviour.
17. Any untoward approaches to members, especially young people under the age of sixteen, whether by members or third parties, should be reported at the time to the leader of the walk or other activity. Such approaches shall include, but not be limited to, any invitation to any activity where there is no parental control. The walk leader shall report any such occurrence to the Secretary or Chairman, who will inform other members of the Committee in order to determine what action should be taken, if any. This action may include, but not be limited to, expulsion from the club subject to the usual right of appeal. The committee will report its decision to the member who made the complaint and, at its discretion, the member who was the subject of the complaint. The deliberations of the Committee will remain confidential.
18. The Club will always abide by the provisions of current data protection legislation. Members' addresses and telephone numbers will be made available to the appropriate office bearers and area organisers, but beyond that they will not be divulged to other members or any third party without their express permission. Any breach of these arrangements must be reported as soon as possible to the Chairman or Secretary for reference to the Committee. Any untoward incident on any Club activity must be reported in like manner.

11 October 2000

Revised 30 April 2003 (25th AGM)

Revised 16 May 2005 (27th AGM)

Revised 25 March 2006 (28th AGM)

Revised 17 May 2008 (30th AGM)

Revised 4 April 2009 (31st AGM)

Revised 19 May 2012 (34th AGM)

Revised 18 May 2013 (35th AGM)

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APPENDIX

The aims of the club are stored in a separate document, which must be inserted here whenever this constitution is printed, or supplied with this document to members who request a copy of the constitution.