

The Ramblers, Merseyside and West Cheshire Area: Liverpool Group AGM.

The 44th AGM was held on Thursday 20 November 2025 at the Quaker Meeting House.

- 1. Welcome:** The Chair, Pat Sullivan, welcomed the 24 members who were present.
- 2. Apologies for absence:** Imogen Parker, Patricia Francis, Doreen Bird, Jenny O'Shaughnessy, Charlie Walker.

A short pause was observed for deceased members of the group: Peter Urmston, Bill Gordon, Joe Dowd, John Ross, Don Loughran.

- 3. Minutes of the last meeting:** Agreed
- 4. Matters arising from the minutes:** none

5. Chair's Report

Pat Sullivan and Stella Yates read out their report (below)

Questions and Comments on Report: none

Janet Hudson proposed acceptance of the report and Nancy Jenkins seconded. Unanimously agreed by the meeting.

6. Treasurer's report:

Michelle Bloom read out her report (below)

Questions and Comments on Report: none

Viv Clark proposed acceptance of the report and Margaret Williams seconded. Unanimously agreed by the meeting.

7. Officers and Committee Members: November 2025- November 2026 **Liverpool Group Officers**

Chair	Stella Yates
Secretary	Janet Hudson
Treasurer	Michelle Bloom
Membership Secretary	Joyce Hughes
Rambles Secretary (Sundays)	Joyce Hughes
Rambles Secretary (Tuesdays)	Jane Lynch
Social Secretary	Sue Jones
Recreational Secretary	Albert Rose
Web Manager	Joyce Hughes
Footpath Secretary	vacant
Auditor	vacant

General Committee Officers

Group chair, treasurer and secretaries+

Yvonne Gordon	Imogen Parker
Nancy Jenkins	Tommy Sussex
Charlie Walker	Maggie Hems
Chris White	Bob Dempsey

Sunday Rambles Committee

Bob Dempsey	Graham Fisher
Yvonne Gordon	Janet Griffin
Janet Hudson	Stella Yates
Chris White	

Tuesday Walks Committee

Alun Davies	Bob Dempsey
Hillary Humphreys	Mike Hulligan
Mike Togstead.	Val Rushton

Social and Recreational Committees

Charlie Walker	Margaret Williams
Jenny O'Shaughnessy	Viv Clark
Doreen Bird	Beryl Wilson

8. Resolutions affecting the constitution: none.

9. Resolutions not affecting the constitution: none.

10. A.O.B. none

11. Date of next AGM: Wednesday 25 November 7pm Quaker Meeting House

Chairs' Report for AGM NOVEMBER 2025 - Pat Sullivan

At the end of Ramblers financial year in September 2025, Liverpool Group had 820 members. This made us the largest Group in the Merseyside and West Cheshire Area and marked our continuing steady growth. Furthermore, our Treasurer's report, which follows this, shows the Group's finances to be sound. We thank our Treasurer Michelle Bloom for her painstaking management of our finances and all the input of time which that involves. All our activities are successful and well attended. In this part of the report, I will refer to those activities, the work and organisation that supports them as well as those officers and members who do so much to achieve the success of our Group and the enjoyment of walking, they provide for the rest of the membership.

In the year from October 2024 to September 2025 Liverpool Group continued to have mostly fully booked coaches going to one of our national parks every week and to offer a choice of 3 walks there. Coach prices were - and still are - kept low at just £15. However, a downturn in bookings has been noted over the year which gives some cause for concern. The overall management of our Sunday rambles -the program of walks, the coach bookings and finances in general - is in the very capable hands of one person and I want to thank Joyce Hughes for all the expertise and hard work she brings to the tasks. We also thank those members who have taken on the responsibility for leading these walks and so made our programme of weekly Sunday rambles possible. However several have now led their last walks and not enough members are coming forward to replace them. Our Group Co-Chair Stella Yates will say more about our leader training initiatives so far but the shortage of leaders remains a challenge for the future.

Tuesday walks have continued to be very popular attracting a large turnout of usually around 30 members, on occasions up to 40. Using public transport members have walked in locations throughout Merseyside, in Cheshire and in Wales and enjoyed a particularly beautiful walk across to Hilbre Island. There has been a train ramble to Chirk and a coach trip to Grasmere. In addition there was a Christmas meal attended by 45 members. All thanks go to Jane Lynch for organising the Tuesday walks programme, to the committee members who support her and the. Leaders who make the walks possible.

Our social and recreation programmes offer a wide variety of activities to members. Meetings in the social programme take place on the last Thursday of the month in The Quaker Meeting House from 2 till 4pm. The programme has included presentations by outside speakers as well as contributions from members. They have covered a wide variety of topics ranging from the history of Tai Chi & Qigong to a 'virtual visit' to The Yorkshire Dales. Activities in the recreation programme have included several leisurely strolls with an optional meal either in places of interest in the city or nearby locations. There have also been theatre and museum visits and tours of buildings of social and historic interest like The Florrie and Liverpool's China town. All thanks go to Sue Jones and Albert Rose and their committees for organising these interesting activities.

So, members of Liverpool Group have plenty of opportunities to meet and walk and pursue different interests thanks to those who organise our activities and to those who lead them. Our members also help to enable others to enjoy walking and our environment. Some support the blind and visually impaired guiding and leading them on walks. Others participate in walks for people with mobility problems or chronic pain. Our Group Co- Chair Stella will now continue this report first with an update on our members' work with asylum seekers.

Co-Chair Stella Yates

Part of the Ramblers remit is to reach out to new walkers and welcome them, creating bridges with different communities to share walking and talking, and what it means to be part of this charity. Therefore, since May 2023 Liverpool Ramblers Group has been leading walks with groups of refugees and asylum seekers from Asylum Link. Since the last AGM we have held 9 walks. In that time 98 people have come on our walks. They are from many countries including Eritrea, Namibia, Iran, Syria, Sudan, Cameroon and Afghanistan. Many are separated from their families.

Our aim is to create a relaxed atmosphere for people whose lives are often stressful, help them practise their language skills and take them to cultural spaces people can continue to access for free in the future. I am very grateful to the Ramblers who volunteer to help on these visits around the city to local museums, art galleries and other places of interest. Ramblers UK have given us £500 to help fund these visits. We are currently in conversation with them exploring different funding ideas for the future.

Our next important topic is Leaders. We are extremely grateful for those who continue to lead as well as new leaders. For the first time that I can remember there are 4 dates in the Sunday Rambles Winter Programme when there is no coach due to a shortage of leaders. We are doing all we can to encourage people to volunteer to lead one walk per programme, particularly those who have been members for some years.

During this past year Ramblers UK has been in the process of creating online training for all new walk leaders. Furthermore, in order to remain as registered leaders, it is now mandatory for all walk leaders to satisfy one of these criteria: to complete the online training, or to have led 12 walks within the last 3 years or hold a Mountain Leader's qualification. The Officers are encouraging all walk leaders to complete the online training and all leaders have been contacted. We have also held a session here on 15 November where the training could be completed as part of a group. Currently, of the 81 registered leaders intending to lead walks in the future, 75% has met one of the criteria.

You may remember that at the last AGM we were updating our own guidelines for leaders but paused this until Ramblers UK had developed online training. We completed the Liverpool Group Guidelines for Leaders in May 2025 and launched the booklet at a well-attended meeting for leaders and potential leaders in July. The guidelines are also on our website. The previous edition was written for Sunday walk leaders, but the new edition is inclusive as it is relevant to all types of walk leaders –short leisurely, Tuesdays and Sundays. In conclusion we can report that Ramblers Liverpool Group continues to grow in membership but is heavily reliant upon a small number of volunteers - one of whom still does several jobs for us all as Membership and Rambles secretary, website manager and Facebook administrator. On behalf of all members, we thank our officers and committee members for a positive year, navigating our way through a number of challenges and changes.

Stella Yates November 2025

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE AGM ON THE 20th NOVEMBER 2025

Financial figures as at the 30th of September 2025 have been circulated.

Please note the following from this report:

The Membership fees returned to the Group from the Ramblers Association, were paid in two instalments totalling £861 for the year. In the previous year the Group received £826.

The Group applied to RA Head Office for some 'one off' funding towards the cost of facilitating the Asylum Link Initiative. £500 of funding was received in April 2025, and this has been used in the second half of the financial year. In total £800 of expenses were paid out. After taking into account the £500 of funding received, there was a net cost to the Group of £300.

In 2024/25 the Group received a total donation of £180 from Ramblers Worldwide Holidays, plus a miscellaneous donation from a Member of £4. The donation received from RWH was an increase of £80 on the amount received last financial year.

In November 2024 the Group purchased ID Key Tags from Head Office at a cost of £267. These were distributed on the Sunday and Tuesday Rambles.

The Group were able to offer a full 52 week Sunday coach Rambles Programme in 2024/25, compared to only 49 weeks in the previous financial year. This has increased the income generated year on year by £2,472. On the expenditure side of the accounts, coach hire, driver's tips & parking costs have risen due to a combination of the full Rambles Programme, and a continued increase in the cost of coach travel generally. The effect of both has increased the cost compared to last year by £4,118. Despite this, the Sunday coach Rambles have made a net profit for the year of £1,237.

73 members who qualified for a Loyalty walk on the Sunday Rambles took up the offer of a free seat for one Ramble in the early part of 2025. This reduced the income from selling coach seats by £1,095.

On a Sunday Ramble in mid December 2024 there was a coach breakdown which resulted in some inconvenience to the Ramblers on board. As a result Selwyn's gave the Group a £166 credit on the cost of coach hire on a Ramble in January 2025. The Group's Officers made the decision to pass on the credit to the Ramblers that travelled on the ill-fated Ramble, by offering a £5 discount for a seat on a subsequent Ramble booking. 34 people took up the offer at a total cost of £170.

A Flyer was produced in the Summer at a cost of £69 in order to inform Members of the outcome of a recent Financial Review, and to also inform of the need for new Walk Leaders on the Sunday Rambles.

The Tuesday Group organised a Coach Ramble to Grasmere in June, and a Ramble to Chirk in September using Public transport. After taking into account the Raffle monies collected, Leaders recce monies, parking and driver's tips paid out, the net profit was £57.50.

The Thursday Clubroom Socials have been meeting up monthly and have produced a net profit of £65 with an average attendance of between 14 & 15 people.

A Financial Review was carried out in the Spring of 2025. This consisted of three meetings held between April & May, with the Group Officers in attendance. Estimated figures for the financial year were produced to ascertain a projected financial position at the end of the year. This Review was initiated as there were concerns that the Group would end the year with a loss, due to a combination of a downturn in advance bookings, and increases in costs generally. The outcome of the Review was that a small loss was expected. The Officers made a decision not to increase the cost of a coach seat on the Sunday Rambles, but instead, find a way as a Group to generate more income by exploring fundraising ideas in future years.

The actual loss of £1,972 at the end of the year was more than anticipated at the Financial Review. This is due mainly to a further marked drop in advance bookings, as on the 30th of September 2024, the advance bookings being held for the first three months of the new financial year were £5,244. On the 30th of September this year, the advance bookings held for the same period of time were only £2,950. The cost of £438 for Walk Leaders training was also higher than estimated at the Review.

At the close of the financial year the bank account ended with £9,548 of accumulated funds, which is, as already reported, £1,972 lower than last year. After taking into account the advance bookings of £2,950, the net accumulated surplus for the Group stands at a healthy £6,598.

As I come to the end of my Report, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Chair Pat Sullivan, for all the kindness, encouragement and support she has shown me during the last two years, as I have 'come to grips' with the position of Group Treasurer. I wish her well in all her future endeavours.

I would also like to thank Michele Henderson for completing this year's Independent Audit of the accounts. Michele has recently made the decision to step down as the Independent Auditor from next year, so I also thank her for all the years she has carried out this task.

Thank you.

Michelle Bloom