

LWR NEWS & VIEWS

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XMAS EDITION

AGM TRIPLES ATTENDANCE



The Church House (left)



All Saints Church, Ilkley

When planning the 2025 AGM, the LWR Committee set themselves four goals:-

1. To attract more members to attend the AGM
2. To recognise the outstanding contribution of all our volunteers
3. To build closer links between the committee and the membership
4. To position LWR as a club whose members were proud to belong

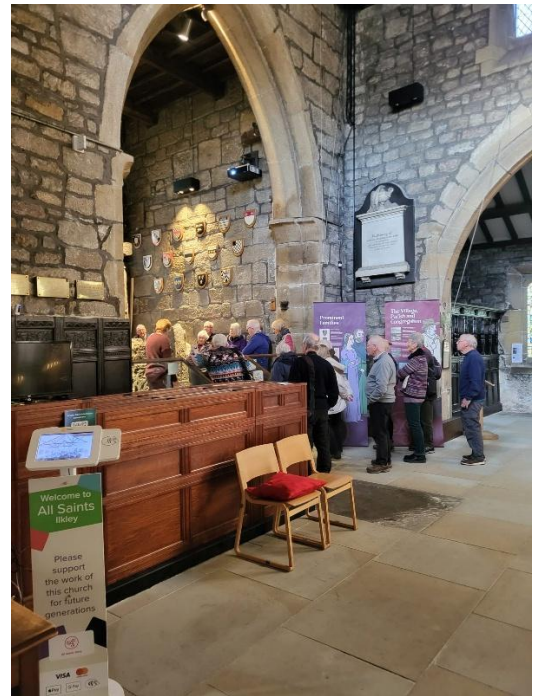
In order to achieve these goals, the committee recognised that simply repeating the traditional 30 minute agenda was not going to work. A new innovative and varied framework was required. To this end:-

1. The AGM was moved back to Ilkley from Burley.
2. The AGM was held during daylight hours
3. A pre-AGM social walk was added

An inspection of 4 potential venues in Ilkley was conducted and the decision was made to select All Saints Church House in the centre of the town. All Saints church is the oldest building in Ilkley and an added bonus was the opportunity to offer a guided tour of the church, prior to the AGM.

The date selected was Friday 21st November and after a week of dreadful weather, the day dawned bright and sunny, but cold.

Starting proceedings was the social walk led by former LWR Chair, Keith Wilman which left All Saints at 10:00am. A group of 14 members joined the walk through Ilkley Tarn, Ben Rhydding and returning along the River Wharfe.



At 1:00pm, 30 members joined Carry Lynott, Heritage Manager, on a tour of All Saints Church taking in Roman graves and Anglo Saxon crosses. So many members wanted to take the tour that bookings had to be closed but Carry has offered to repeat it and this will be organised in 2026.

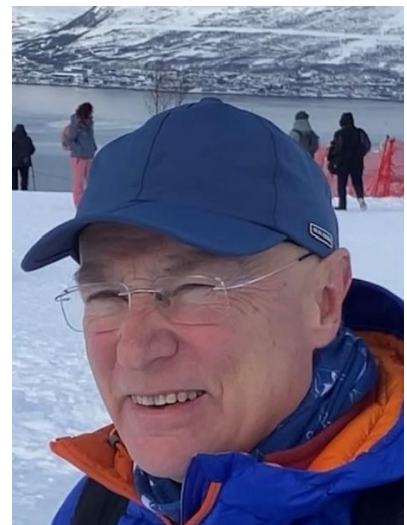
By 1:30 pm, the walkers were back and members were arriving for the Committee Reception organised by Amanda Siswick, Charlotte Jarvis and Helen Hartley. The aim of the reception was to enable members to meet and chat with all LWR committee members on an informal basis, in order to build stronger links across LWR. This was so successful that members had to be dragged away to join the main meeting in Church House at 2:15pm



Antonia



Steve



Richard

Opening the main meeting were Antonia Woosnam-Savage and Richard Brook. Antonia gave a fascinating overview of her role as LWR Footpath Officer having to work with 3 local authorities (North Yorkshire, Leeds, and Bradford) with cover over 3,695 square miles between them. Richard followed Antonia with a description of the projects carried out by the LWR Footpath Maintenance Team over the last 12 months and even brought some of the unusual tools they use in their work.

Following them was the busiest man in LWR, Steve Rawlings, who doubles as LWR Secretary and West Riding Area Chair. During 2025, both Area and Ramblers HQ have independently been reviewing the future structure of the organisation. Steve has been heavily involved with both reviews, which clearly overlap, and gave an update on progress to date with decisions expected in 2026.

Then came the actual AGM, chaired by Mike Briers, which lasted 12 minutes with reports from all committee member. The major item was some changes to the committee:-

ROLE	OUTGOING 2024/25	INCOMING 2025/26
Chair	Mike Briers	Mike Briers
Secretary	Steve Rawlings	Charlotte Jarvis
Treasurer	Mike Rogers	Mike Rogers
Membership	Charlotte Jarvis	Helen Hartley
Footpaths	Antonia Woosnam-Savage	Antonia Woosnam-Savage
Social	Amanda Siswick	Amanda Siswick
PR	Chris Tye	Chris Tye

Notably, every member of the committee is a regular walker.

Following the formalities, the floor was cleared and Mike Briers raised a toast to all the LWR volunteers without whom nothing would happen.



A slide and photo was shown for every walking group, listing all the walk members. Similar slides were also shown for the Footpath Maintenance Team, Social and the LWR Committee itself. Many members take part in more than one voluntary activity. For instance our Treasurer, Mike Rogers, also leads walks and is a member of the footpath maintenance team. Overall LWR members contribute around 120 different volunteer activities from leading walks to managing the website.



Mike also highlighted the voluntary walk LWR does to support the local walking community including Yorkshire Air Ambulance, Burley welcomes Walkers and the Otley Walking Festival.



Finally we were delighted to welcome Gerry Sayers from Yorkshire Air Ambulance and raise another toast to Social Secretary, Amanda Siswick who presented her with a cheque for £1155, raised through the recent 'Singo Bingo' event that she had organised.

Overall over 60 members took part in the event over the course of the day and the committee were delighted with such a positive response that helped them achieve their goals.



As outlined above, the committee deliberately tried many new ideas this year to improve the agm experience and encourage more members to attend. The response was excellent and many members have provided feedback to help us plan for the future.

If you have given feedback already – thank you. If not – please would you send your comments to publicity@lowerwharfedaleramblers.co.uk?

IF YOU ATTENDED	IF YOU DID NOT ATTEND
What did you like? What did you not like? What did you think of the venue? What would you like to see more of in the future? What would you like to see less of? Any suggestions?	Were you aware of the AGM? Why did you not attend? What would persuade you to attend in future?

KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU

Prior to the AGM we discovered many LWR members did not know who the committee were or what they looked like. Hopefully the AGM helped address this but following a suggestion from Ian Haigh we will be putting a photo of every committee member on the LWR website, plus Richard Brook as footpath maintenance team leader.

The committee is there to serve the membership and contact details for all of them can be found on the website. Obviously, if they are on your walk, please feel free to chat to them and share any views, ideas or concerns

HELEN HARTLEY ELECTED TO REPLACE CHARLOTTE JARVIS AS MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY



Helen, who walks regularly with the A and B groups, was elected to the important role of Membership Secretary at the AGM.

Helen was born in Bury and after attending university in Sheffield, studying statistics, she moved to London to start her career with BT. Initially working in IT, after the birth of her two children she retrained as a school teacher. Teaching maths and IT, she taught in secondary school until she retired. With her son living locally and a daughter in Glasgow, Helen and her husband, Julian, decided to relocate to Ilkley from Watford in 2023 and both joined LWR in the same year. Apart from walking, Helen's other interests include swimming at Ilkley lido, bridge, yoga, Bird watching and yoga, plus an occasional dip in the River Wharfe.

Helen can be contacted via the LWR website

NEW WALK CO-ORDINATORS FOR THE C GROUP

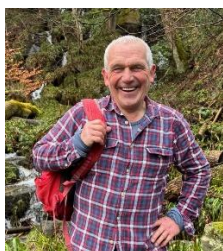


We are delighted to announce that Adrienne Eaton and Tim Wilkinson are replacing Mark Ludlam as the walk co-ordinators for the C group. Mark will step down on December 31st 2025.

Tim has worked alongside Mark as walk co-ordinator for many years and is very familiar with the role already. Adrienne is a long standing C group walker, well known within the group. Both attended the group leader training held on December 8th and are now fully qualified leaders.

The first programme they will organise is February 2026. The committee thank them for taking on this important role with our largest group and wish them every success.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST.....



Steve



Mark

On behalf of all the members and the Committee, I would like to thank Mark Ludlam for his 6 years of service as C group walks coordinator and Steve Rawlings for his dedicated service as LWR Secretary. We wish them all the best for the future and look forward to them continuing to join us on our walks.

Mike Briers, LWR Chair