Annual General Meeting
15th November 2026

Membership Secretary's Report

30th September:	2023	2024	2025	2026
	104,48	105,68	107,90	108,88
All Ramblers membership	6	1	7	5
% change		1.1%	2.1%	0.9%
Area membership	2,949	3,079	3,162	3,215
% change		4.4%	2.7%	
WHR membership	438	426	417	407
Joiners		60	55	56
Leavers		72	64	66
Change		-12	-9	-10
% change		-2.7%	-2.1%	-2.4%
WHR affiliates	8	10	10	16

Groups in Herts & North Middlesex Area

30th September:	2025	2026	% change
West Herts	417	407	-2.4%
East Herts	229	248	8.3%
North Herts	433	398	-8.1%
N London & S Herts	530	539	1.7%
Royston	135	130	-3.7%
Watford & Three Rivers	321	311	-3.1%
Finchley & Hornsey	381	349	-8.4%
Herts Weekend Walkers	179	174	-2.8%
Stag Walkers	188	200	6.4%
Herts Dog Friendly Walkers (created in June)	0	25	
Not assigned to a group	349	434	24.4%

2024	293
2023	183
2022	161
2021	82

Why is our membership falling?

In the past year Ramblers membership went up, Area membership went up, but West Herts Ramblers Group membership went down. It results from a decision to stop automatically assigning new members to a Group. If new members do not choose a Group, they are not put in one.

I understand that a recent review of Ramblers governance concerned several aspects, one of which was the role of Areas and Groups. It proposed that new members should initially be allocated to Groups based on geographical location, with the right to change Group or Area. At the Ramblers' General Council AGM in April 2026, the proposed new Articles of Association and Standing Orders were put to a vote. 72.5% of those voting supported the proposals, but this fell short of the 75% majority required for constitutional change. A further collaborative review of the Areas and Groups structure was scheduled to begin in autumn 2026, separate from the governance review.

Change to our use of email lists

The mailing lists used by Ramblers Groups are maintained by Central Office. There are different ones for

1. AGM invitations
2. anything containing marketing (as defined under GDPR etc)
3. anything not containing marketing

Before this year, the second one was used for emails both from Central Office and West Herts Ramblers. Members have occasionally opted out from the Central Office emails, not realising that they would no longer receive Group emails (and perhaps vice versa).

Central Office suggested that we use the "non-marketing" email list. Though there are grey areas, nothing that we have emailed recently would be considered as marketing. As long as we do not expand the contents into anything that is more overtly marketing, we can use the non-marketing email list for our emails. Members who wish to opt out of the Group's emails are informed how to do this at the bottom of the emails.