



GENERAL COUNCIL IN MORE DETAIL

General Council is the body of people who are regarded as company members of the Ramblers for legal purposes. In particular they are entitled to speak and vote at the annual general meeting (which is also commonly referred to as General Council), but remain company members throughout the year.

Each Ramblers Area, and each national organisation affiliated to us, is entitled to appoint members of General Council. While our Groups and individual members are not directly represented, they can influence the policy of the Ramblers via their Area's Council members. Trustees, our president, vice presidents and members of the Motions Review Committee are also members of General Council.

General Council elects the board of trustees which runs the organisation on behalf of members and for the public benefit. Council considers the annual report and accounts and provides guidance on policy by debating policy motions. It also approves changes to our constitution.

Council members

The following are members of General Council, entitled to speak and vote during the formal sessions of general meetings.

President

The president acts as a figurehead for the organisation and is elected annually at the AGM. The post has been filled in the past by politicians, media personalities and prominent Ramblers activists

Vice presidents

All former presidents become vice presidents for life (unless they indicate they do not wish to do so). Vice presidency can also be conferred by General Council to honour individuals who have made a particularly significant contribution to Ramblers; these have to be re-elected annually (though, after their first such election, this is normally a formality).

Trustees

The board of trustees comprises the chair, honorary treasurer, nine 'ordinary' members, an appointee each of Ramblers Scotland and Ramblers Cymru, and up to two co-opted members, appointed by the board.

Council members appointed by Areas

Each Area is entitled to appoint two Council members. Areas with membership over 4% of the total Ramblers membership can appoint a third. Area Council members are appointed annually at Area AGMs and serve for one year starting at the General Council AGM.

Council members appointed by affiliated national organisations

Each affiliated national organisation is entitled to appoint one Council member.

Motions Review Committee members

There are five members of the committee elected each year by General Council. (The committee also includes two members appointed by the board of trustees.)

There are around 140 Council members in total. Council members appointed by Areas make up the majority of General Council.

The annual general meeting of General Council

The main items of AGM business are to:

- Approve the minutes of the previous AGM
- Consider the annual report and accounts
- Elect the president, vice presidents, trustees and members of the Motions Review Committee.
- Appoint an auditor and authorise the board to set the auditor's remuneration
- Receive the board's report setting out what action has been taken on previous council members' motions
- Consider (i.e. debate) and, if thought fit, pass council members' motions (and any special or ordinary resolutions)

Council members' motions

Motions may be submitted by Areas, constituent parts (i.e. Ramblers Scotland and Ramblers Cymru), affiliated national organisations and the board of trustees.

Nominations for posts to be elected at the General Council AGM

Nominations for members of the board of trustees

At each year's General Council AGM at least three trustees are elected to serve a three-year term of office. Candidates must have been an individual member of the Ramblers for at least 12 consecutive months as at the closing date for nomination. The only exception to this relates to candidates for the post of honorary treasurer, who are only required to be individual members from the date of the General Council AGM at which they are standing for election. Candidates must be nominated by three individual members of the Ramblers who have been individual members for at least 36 consecutive months as at the closing date for nominations. No individual member may nominate more than one candidate for any position on the board of trustees for election at any General Council AGM.

Nominations for president and vice presidents

Apart from former presidents, who remain vice presidents for life unless they choose not to, these officers are elected annually for a term of one year, but are eligible for re-election. There is no limit on the number of vice presidents who may be elected. There are no eligibility restrictions, although vice presidency is normally conferred on individuals who have given exceptional service to Ramblers over many years. The presidency is an honorary role and is focussed on internal support for volunteers, staff and members and externally, providing a figurehead for the organisation to external stakeholders and the general public. Candidates need to be nominated by two current General Council members.

Nominations for members of the Motions Review Committee

At each AGM five members are elected by Council. Members are elected for a term of one year, but are eligible for re-election. Candidates must either be Council members eligible to attend the General Council AGM at which they are proposed for election or have been council members during the previous year. Persons who are continuing as members of, or standing for election to, the board of trustees are not eligible. Candidates must be nominated by two current General Council members. No individual member may propose or second more than one Motions Review Committee candidate for election at any General Council AGM.

General Council between annual general meetings

Under normal circumstances General Council is only called upon to act at the AGM. However council members retain that status throughout the year. The board of trustees may decide, from time to time, to consult council members on an informal basis. More formally, there are a number of other options for General Council to operate between AGMs which may be initiated either by the board or by demand of a required proportion of Council members.