

THE RAMSGATE SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

JULY 9th at the SAN CLU HOTEL, RAMSGATE, at 7pm

AGENDA and Relevant Papers

- 1. Welcome by Chairman, John Walker, and Introductions**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM, 25 July 2024 (attached)**
- 4. Matters Arising**
- 5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for 2024-25 (attached)**
- 6. TREASURER'S REPORT & ACCOUNTS for 2024 (attached)**
- 7. Election of the Executive Committee for 2025-2026 (attached)**
- 8. Election of the Society's Officers for 2025-26 (attached)**
- 9. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & DISCUSSION**
- 10. Any Other Business**

Michael Ashley, Hon. Secretary

Enclosure: Item 3

The Ramsgate Society

Minutes of the 58th Annual General Meeting

Held on July 25th 2024 at the San Clu Hotel, Ramsgate, 8pm-9pm

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman, John Walker, welcomed those present to the meeting, and asked each of the Executive Committee members present to introduce themselves. He particularly extended a welcome to the two most recent additions to the Committee, Susanne Ford and Jacqui Ansell.

2. Apologies for Absence

Committee members Davena Green, Brian Daubney, Paul Shearer, Phil Shotten.

3. Minutes of the 2023 AGM

The Minutes had been made available to all those attending. They were *accepted unanimously* as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman as such.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

5. Chairman's Report for 2023-24

The Chairman's written report was distributed at the meeting, and was presented by the Chairman. A copy of the Report is attached to these Minutes. The Chairman thanked the members of the Committee, and those who had resigned during 2023-24, for their hard work during the year.

6. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2023

The report and accounts for the year to 31st December 2023 were made available to those present at the meeting. The Treasurer's Report also included additional information for the period 31st December 2023 to 30th April 2024 to bring members up to date on the Society's finances. The Society's Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2023 are attached to these minutes in the Form CC16a as required by the Charity Commission.

David was thanked for his work in improving the finances of the Society and their presentation. The accounts were accepted as an accurate record of the year's activity and *approved unanimously*.

7. Election of the Executive Committee (and to serve as Trustees of the Charity)

The following served as members of the Executive Committee during 2023-24 and had indicated in advance that they were, or were not, seeking re-election for 2024-25:

(i) Those seeking re-election

John Walker (Chairman); Richard Oades (Joint Vice-Chairman); Mike Ashley (Joint Vice-Chairman); David Lister (Hon. Treasurer); Terry Prue; Paul Shearer; Phil Shotten; and Rob Warren.

(ii) Those who have resigned during the course of the year and were not seeking re-election

Sue Gyde (resigned 31 December 2023); Irene Seijo (resigned 31 December 2023); and Graham Woolnough (Hon Secretary, resigned 3rd April 2024).

The following members of the Committee, who had been co-opted during the course of the year, Susanne Ford and Jacqui Ansell, were recommended to the meeting for election as Members of the Executive and Trustees of the Charity.

The AGM *unanimously agreed* to the Executive Committee's recommendation that all those seeking re-election, including the two co-optees seeking election, be elected.

8. Election of Officers

The following had offered themselves for election or re-election as Officers of the Executive Committee and Charity: John Walker (Chairman), seeking re-election as Chairman; Richard Oades (Vice-Chairman), seeking re-election as Joint Vice-Chairman; Mike Ashley*, seeking election as Joint Vice-Chairman; and David Lister (Hon. Treasurer), seeking election as Hon. Treasurer.

The meeting *unanimously agreed* to these appointments.

*Mike Ashley had been appointed Joint Vice-Chairman at the Executive meeting on March 7th during the course of the year. Also during the year Brian Daubney had been appointed Vice President to replace George Arnheim who

had resigned from that role on December 1st 2023: these changes were also *acknowledged* by the meeting.

9. Members' Comments and Questions:

Denise Blunn acknowledged the importance which the Committee had accorded to the issue of climate change, but also wanted to stress the significance to the Society of the work on the Clock House and Museum, and the designation of the Royal harbour as a new member of the "Heritage Harbour" organisation.

Sophie Clissold-Lesser, a new member, offered her services to the Committee and/or Working Groups.

10. Any Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at shortly after 9pm.

Enclosure: Item 5

Ramsgate Society Chairman's Report AGM, 9th July 2025

I am pleased to report that the Society has been very active since our last AGM in July 2024 and I set out below a brief summary of some of our recent activities.

60th Anniversary Celebrations

2024 marked the 60th Anniversary of the founding of The Ramsgate Society in 1964 and we celebrated this event with a reception at The Albion Hotel in June this year. We were able to reflect on some of our recent achievements, some of which I have included on the **Annex** attached to my report. The event was fully subscribed and we were entertained by the wonderful Bertie Pearce, a member of the Magic Circle, whose magic tricks astonished and amazed everyone who was there. This was an event to remember as I suspect none of us will be around to repeat the event in another 60 years' time.

Our thanks go to Rob Warren, one of our Trustees and Committee members who edited and produced a superb 60th Anniversary edition of Ramsgate Matters for this event, which is available free of charge to our members.

The Clock House and Pier Yard

Many members will be aware that the Society launched this project in 2016 with a feasibility study funded by a grant of £25,000 from the Coastal Community Fund and a very significant offer of support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. We were disappointed that TDC declined to proceed at the time. It later emerged that they preferred to negotiate a surrender of the existing lease to the Steam Museum Trust, obtain vacant possession, and to offer the property on the open market.

Things remained dormant for a further five years but then in 2021 TDC were awarded £20million for Ramsgate as part of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and the Clock House and Pier Yard were included in the project, based on our original proposals. Four years have since passed and in June this year TDC obtained planning permission, but for a very much reduced scheme, due to their priority to use as much of the LUF funding to improve the facilities in the Port of Ramsgate in the hope of attracting an operator in order to run a new ferry service. In June this year TDC announced that, after extensive marketing,

no operator had been found for the Port and that £1.7million of the LUF monies would be reallocated back to the Clock House.

In the meantime, Rob Warren (Trustee of The Ramsgate Society and a professional museum curator) has been engaged by TDC to catalogue the museum collection, which TDC now own, and to remove it to a secure storage facility in one of their properties. This work has now been completed with the help of some of our dedicated volunteers to whom we are very grateful.

Work is due to commence on the Clock House in the Autumn of this year with completion in Autumn 2026. Discussions with TDC with regards to the future management of the Museum are ongoing and hopefully we will be able to report positively on this at our next AGM.

Ramsgate Heritage Harbour

In July 2024, Ramsgate's Royal Harbour was awarded the status of a National Heritage Harbour, only one of fourteen locations across the United Kingdom to receive this important designation. The Ramsgate Society was asked to incorporate the newly formed Ramsgate Heritage Harbour Group (HHG) as a sub-committee of the Society and now hosts monthly meetings of the group going forward.

Heritage Harbours is a joint initiative between Historic England, the Maritime Heritage Trust, National Historic Ships and local community groups. Its aims include: protecting heritage assets at risk; attracting investment and heritage funding, supporting local business growth; increasing tourism; and improving community cohesion and inclusion. These Objectives sit very well alongside those of the Ramsgate Society and we look forward to working with the HHG to deliver some much needed improvements to the Royal Harbour, which is a huge asset to the town.

The Plan for Neighbourhoods

In Spring 2024, Thanet District Council was successful in securing up to £20m endowment style funding for investment in local priorities over a 10-year period within the Ramsgate area. Previously called The "Long-Term Plan for Towns", the new "Plan for Neighbourhoods" seeks to empower local communities to identify and deliver projects that will tackle local challenges and inequalities.

The Plan for Neighbourhoods programme brings together community representatives, businesses, and strategic partners to prioritise funding into areas of local need to build a brighter future for all. Led by a Neighbourhood

Board in partnership with Thanet District Council, the Board will develop a 10-Year Regeneration Plan for Ramsgate to address deprivation and regeneration of the area. The Ramsgate Society has been invited by TDC to sit on the new Board to represent the heritage sector in Ramsgate in deciding how the money should be allocated.

The Port of Ramsgate

Together with the Ramsgate Regeneration Alliance we have previously expressed our concerns about the ongoing losses, then amounting to some £30million, and the TDC proposals to invest further public funds in improvements to the existing unused RoRo facilities and further intensify the industrialisation of the Port without a credible business plan.

After the failure to find an operator for the Port TDC are now considering what other options are available to them for the Port and we await hearing what those options might be. We assume TDC will engage with local community groups as to what local residents would like to see done with the Port and will ensure that any options are economically viable and sustainable in the longer term.

The Society would like to see a much more collaborative approach to decision making on this issue and will be working with TDC and The Ramsgate Regeneration Alliance (RRA) to help secure some economically viable and sustainable outcomes.

Local Government Reorganisation.

Earlier this year the Government announced its intention to reorganise local government by abolishing the existing District Councils and creating new larger Unitary Authorities. In the case of East Kent this would mean the abolition of Canterbury, Thanet, Dover and Folkestone District Councils and the creation of a new single East Kent Unitary Authority. The Government asked both District Councils and County Councils to submit proposals for how they think this should be implemented in their own areas by the end of March 2025 and final proposals are required by the end of November 2025. The Government will then respond in Spring 2026 and legislation will follow. "Shadow" Unitary Authorities will be created in 2027 and the new arrangements will become fully operational in 2028.

It is assumed that some form of public consultation will take place on the proposals for East Kent. Details of these consultations have not yet been

announced but we will endeavour to keep our members informed as to what is being proposed as matters progress.

Events and Community Engagement.

Sea front Shelters. We continued throughout the year working in partnership with Ramsgate Town Council to maintain and clean the 14 sea front shelters that the Society renovated in 2022.

Heritage Open Days. For several years now the Society has co-ordinated Heritage Open Days in Thanet. This year we are working collaboratively with Thanet District Council to coordinate the event across the whole of Thanet. The event this year will take place from 12th to 21st September and a new leaflet for this will be printed and distributed widely across Thanet in August.

Litter Picks. Litter continues to be a problem, not just in Ramsgate but also in Thanet generally and the country as a whole. As an active member of the Ramsgate Litter Forum we work with Ramsgate Town Council and other local community groups to try and keep the litter off our streets. We specifically organise two of our own Litter Picks each year, one in April and another in October and details of the event this coming October will be published in our monthly newsletter and on our website.

Ramsgate Society Talks Series. Our series of regular talks organised by committee member Terry Prue continues to be very popular, with most events fully booked in advance. Details of our monthly talks are posted in our monthly newsletters and on our website www.ramsgatesociety.org.uk. Early registration via Eventbrite is recommended.

Dunkirk Little Ships Event May 2025. In May this year the Dunkirk Little Ships revisited Ramsgate to celebrate the 85th Anniversary of Operation Dynamo in 1940, which changed the course of World War 2. The event was a great success with thousands of people attending the various activities.

The Society was involved in helping to organise the event via the Heritage Harbour Group which acted as an umbrella organisation for the participants and special thanks are due to the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships and their Commodore Kevin Finn, The Royal Temple Yacht Club, Ramsgate Town Council, Ramsgate Tunnels and many other local community groups who all came together to make this happen.

Our own particular contributions were to arrange for the restoration of the Dunkirk War Memorial in Pier Yard which was originally unveiled by Dame Vera

Lynn in 2000 and again by Prince Michael of Kent when he visited Ramsgate on May 20th this year as part of the Dunkirk Little Ships Event. We also helped fund the Dunkirk Little Ships Film Festival which took place over three evenings at the Granville Theatre. We are looking forward to having the Little Ships back again soon.

Community Champion Awards 2024

For many years, the Ramsgate Society Community Champions Award has been given to local people who, in the opinion of the Society's Executive Committee, have made an exceptional contribution to the quality of life in the town. For 2024, we worked on the award in a joint partnership with Ramsgate Town Council and the presentation ceremony took place on December 18th in the Council Chamber at The Custom House. Ramsgate's Mayor, Cllr. Pat Moore, escorted by Sea Cadet Evan Bradley, presented certificates to eighteen Ramsgate residents who were nominated to be recognised for the work they do to make Ramsgate a better place to live and visit. A full list of winners by category can be found in 'Linked Documents' within the Archive section of our website.

Membership and Communications

Our monthly electronic newsletter continues to be the most effective way of communicating with our members and keeps members updated on our activities on a regular basis. Over the last year our membership and communications working group have worked hard to update our membership records and as a result we have seen our membership and subscription base starting to grow.

Finance.

Our finances continue to be in good shape and our most recent accounts will be presented for approval by members at this AGM. I would like to offer our special thanks to David Lister our Treasurer for the excellent work he does in keeping our accounts and finances under close and efficient control.

Finally. I would like to thank the members of the Ramsgate Society Executive Committee for all their hard work during the last twelve months. They are a very dedicated team who are all passionate about Ramsgate and it's a pleasure for me to act as their Chairman. I would particularly like to mention Richard Oades who stood down this year after many years as a valuable and active committee member. Thank you Richard!

John Walker, Chairman

ANNEX to Chairman's Annual Report

Ramsgate Society: Achievements in the first 60 Years

- 1. Renovation and ongoing maintenance of 15 Sea Front Shelters**
- 2. Ramsgate Society Design Awards**
- 3. The Clock House Project (2016-2025)**
- 4. Community Champion Awards**
- 5. Van Gogh Summer 2019**
- 6. Ellington Park Restoration (Supporting The Friends of Ellington Park)**
- 7. Twice a year Chine to Chine Litter Picks.**
- 8. Planting 50 Trees in the Ramsgate Conservation Area in 2020.**
- 9. Partnering Historic England in the Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone Project.**
- 10. Coordinating the Annual Thanet Heritage Open Days with The National Trust**
- 11. Highly successful Monthly Talks Series**
- 12. Ramsgate Society Blue Plaques Project**
- 13. Conservation Area Appraisal with Historic England**
- 14. Campaigning against the Manston DCO**
- 15. Supporting Ramsgate Town Council with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan**
- 16. Heritage Harbour Group**

John Walker

The Ramsgate Society
Statement of Financial Activity

For the year to 31st December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income
<u>Planning, Heritage & Regeneration:</u>				
Manston Judicial Review (donations received)				£1,500.00
Manston Judicial Review (donations passed on)			£1,500.00	
Clock House & Maritime Museum	£962.50			£20,122.94
	£962.50	£0.00	£1,500.00	£21,622.94
		<u>-£962.50</u>		<u>£20,122.94</u>
<u>Events & Community Engagement:</u>				
Shelters	£1,459.44		£1,400.00	£1,400.00
Litter Picks	£79.91			
Tall Ships Feasibility Study (Costs)	£454.46		£6,290.00	
Heritage Harbour Events Income				£105.52
Heritage Harbour Events Expenses			£9.00	
Heritage Open Days (costs)	£170.09		£0.00	
Other Events (costs)	£11.90			
	£2,175.80	£0.00	£7,699.00	£1,505.52
		<u>-£2,175.80</u>		<u>-£6,193.48</u>
<u>Membership & Communications:</u>				
Membership subscriptions received		£4,535.00		
Gift Aid		£294.69		
Membership subscriptions costs (database)	£175.00			
Talks (admissions received)		£1,643.76		
Talks (costs)	£735.95			
Ramsgate Matter Publication	£557.84			
Website Maintenance and Development	£660.00			
	£2,128.79	£6,473.45		
		<u>£4,344.66</u>		
<u>Other:</u>				
Donations Received		£434.93		
Sales of Books & Goods		£4.00		
Donations Given				
General Administration Costs	£248.38			
Insurance	£157.00			
Depreciation Charge	£63.33			
Telecommunications	£390.28			
Postage & Stationery	£496.66			
Advertising & Promotions	£500.00			
Bank & Finance Charges	£1.29			
	£1,856.94	£438.93		
		<u>-£1,418.01</u>		
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period:		<u>-£211.65</u>		<u>£13,929.46</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period (Overall)				<u>£13,717.81</u>

The Ramsgate Society
Profit & Loss Account

For the year to 31st December 2024

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		<u>Restricted Funds</u>	
	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
Membership Subscriptions		£4,535.00		
Shelters – Donations				£1,400.00
Donations		£434.93		
Gift Aid		£294.69		
Talks (Admissions, etc)		£1,643.76		
Heritage Harbour Events Income				£105.52
Manston Judicial Review (Donation Received)				£1,500.00
Eames Legacy – Maritime Museum Donation				£20,122.94
Sales (Books & Goods)		£4.00		
		£6,912.38		£23,128.46
<u>Expenditure:</u>				
Shelters	£1,459.44		£1,400.00	
Clock House & Maritime Museum	£962.50			
Litter Picks	£79.91			
Manston Judicial Review (Donation Paid)	£0.00		£1,500.00	
Heritage Open Days (Costs)	£170.09			
Tall Ships Feasibility Study (Costs)	£454.46		£6,290.00	
Heritage Harbour Events Expenses			£9.00	
Other Events	£11.90			
Ramsgate Matters Publication	£557.84			
Talks Programme Costs	£735.95			
Website Development & Maintenance	£660.00			
Membership Subscriptions Costs	£175.00			
General Administration Costs	£248.38			
Telecommunications	£390.28			
Printing, Postage & Stationery	£496.66			
Advertising and Promotion	£500.00			
Bank/Finance Charges	£1.29			
Insurance	£157.00			
Depreciation Charge (PA Equipment over 3 years)	£63.33			
	£7,124.03		£9,199.00	
<u>Surplus/(Deficit) for the period</u>		<u>-£211.65</u>		<u>£13,929.46</u>
<u>Surplus/(Deficit) for the period (Overall)</u>				<u>£13,717.81</u>

The Ramsgate Society
Balance Sheet

For the year to 31st December 2024

	<u>Assets</u>	<u>Liabilities</u>
<u>Fixed Assets</u>		
Investments - 934.46 Cazenove Charity Equity Fund	£16,511.91	
Plant & Equipment – brought forward	£190.00	
Plant & Equipment – depreciation brought forward	-£63.33	
Plant & Equipment – depreciation charge in the year	-£63.33	
	<u>£16,575.25</u>	
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Bank Account (Unrestricted Funds)	£20,991.72	
Bank Account (Restricted Funds)	£20,219.46	
Natwest Current Account Balance	<u>£41,211.18</u>	
<u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Trade Creditors (purchases due for payment)		£137.50
		<u>£137.50</u>
<u>Net Current Assets</u>		<u>£41,073.68</u>
<u>Total Assets less Liabilities</u>		<u>£57,648.93</u>
<u>Surplus/(Deficit)</u>		
Funds Surplus Brought Forward		£41,286.60
Surplus/(Deficit) in the current year		£13,717.81
Reserve – Gain on Investments		£2,644.52
Surplus/(Deficit) carried forward		<u>£57,648.93</u>
<u>Restricted funds balance being:</u>		
Heritage Harbour fund		£96.52
Eames Legacy – for Maritime Museum		£20,122.94
		<u>£20,219.46</u>

**Restricted Funds Account Analysis
For the year to 31st December 2024**

Tall Ships Feasibility Study

5 Dec 2023	Launch Properties		£500.00
5 Dec 2023	AIG Albion Place Ltd		£5,000.00
13 Dec 2023	Ramsgate Town Council		£1,750.00
18 Dec 2023	Tall Ships Global Consultancy	£960.00	
22 Jun 2024	Tall Ships Global Consultancy	£440.40	
27 Jun 2024	Perfect Events Group	£352.97	
30 Jun 2024	Tall Ships Global Consultancy	£2,400.00	
12 Jul 2024	Parkers Digital – Brochure printing	£85.61	
12 Jul 2024	Tall Ships Global Consultancy	£408.00	
15 Jul 2024	Tall Ships Global Consultancy	£652.08	
9 Aug 2024	Tall Ships Global Consultancy	£2,400.00	
9 Aug 2024	Funds transferred from Society account		£449.06
		£7,699.06	£7,699.06

Account balance: **£0.00**

Heritage Harbour Events

16 Sep 2024	Clock House Museum exhibition donations		£101.52
16 Sep 2024	Sale of books – "Ramsgate Caught In Time"		£4.00
16 Sep 2024	Clock House Museum at Dreamland – parking	£9.00	
		£9.00	£105.52
			<u>£96.52</u>

Eames Legacy – Maritime Museum Donation

22 May 2024	Donation received		£20,122.94
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Total restricted funds account balance **£20,219.46**

Total unrestricted funds account balance **£20,991.72**

Natwest Bank Balance **£41,211.18**

ENCLOSURE: ITEMS 7 and 8

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and ELECTION OF OFFICERS for 2025-26

Executive Committee

1. Nomination Papers for both the Executive Committee and the four Officer posts were sent out to all Members 28 days in advance of the AGM, with a deadline for return by June 25th. The only nominations (proposed and seconded in writing by members of the Society) received were those of the existing members of the Committee and the four Office holders. The AGM is therefore invited to *confirm or otherwise* the re-election of all the nominees, and to *retrospectively confirm* the provisional appointment of both new members of the Committee and those members who have been provisionally appointed to new posts since last year's AGM by the Executive Committee.
2. Two members of the Committee have resigned since the previous AGM: Richard Oades, previously the Vice-Chairman for many years, and latterly Joint Vice-Chairman, resigned on 10 December 2024; and Jacqui Ansell resigned on the same date.
3. The AGM is invited to confirm retrospectively the appointment of Sophie Clissold-Lesser to the Committee on 4 September 2024.
4. The following are seeking re-election to the Executive Committee and the AGM is invited to confirm the election of each nominee:

John Walker, Sophie Clissold-Lesser, David Lister, Michael Ashley, Terry Prue, Paul Shearer, Phil Shotton, Rob Warren, and Susanne Ford.
5. Our Constitution includes the provision for the appointment of honorary members of the Executive Committee, specifically Vice Presidents. Davena Green and Brian Daubney currently hold these positions, and are full working members of the Committee. The AGM

is invited to continue with the appointment of these two Vice Presidents

Officers of the Committee

6. The four Officer Posts are Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary. They have to be members of the Executive Committee.

7. John Walker, the Chairman, and David Lister, the Hon. Treasurer, have held their posts throughout the last year, and are seeking re-election. The AGM is invited to approve their re-election for the forthcoming year.

8. With the other two posts, there have been some changes during the year. Sophie Clissold-Lesser was appointed to the post of Vice-Chairman on 10 December 2024. The AGM is invited to confirm retrospectively her appointment by the Committee, and her re-election to this post for the forthcoming year.

9. Michael Ashley was appointed by the Committee to the post of Hon. Secretary on 12 September 2024. The AGM is invited to confirm retrospectively his appointment, and his re-election to the post for the forthcoming year.