



Newsletter

Winter 2012/2013

Hello,

Well I don't know about you but I'm still waiting for summer to arrive!

With the hope that winter will bring better weather, the new programme has been put together by an optimistic band of people who believe that rain will never fall on their walk (well I didn't like to disillusion them!).

So thank you to all the leaders who have offered walks and to Roger Brown for co-ordinating the programme. Special thanks to Lynne Esson who has volunteered to produce a programme of short Saturday walks which could bring in new members. It would be good if we could all give her some support and join these walks to make them a success. If you know of anyone who would like to start walking then let them know these walks will be taking place.

All Wales Coast Path

It's finally open (not finished but open) and some of us walked the Gower section over the May Bank Holiday weekend. This was an opportunity for Swansea Ramblers to attract new members so it was a shame that more of the membership didn't join in. We arranged an opening ceremony at Bracelet which was attended by AMs and MPs, the leader of Swansea Council and over 50 scouts.

We have made a contribution to the cost of the stepping stones that carry the coast path over Cheriton Pill and also donated money to produce the tourist leaflet promoting the Gower section of the Coast Path. Both projects bear our logo to promote Swansea Ramblers.

Ramblers Festival of Evening Walks

July was rather wet and this literally put a dampener on the festival! We had some interest from members of the public so hopefully we can do something similar next year to boost membership.

Publicising our walks

I've managed to get our walks into the *What's On* brochure and onto the council website. Flyers have been sent to libraries for display on their screens. Already it has generated some interest from the public who have come on a few walks. If you know of anywhere you could publicise our walks then let us know.

Ramblers Holidays

Don't forget to consider Ramblers Holidays when you are arranging your next trip because they will make a donation to us if you book a holiday with them. Just let them know that you are a member of Swansea Ramblers. See <http://www.ramblersholidays.co.uk> for details.

Swansea Walking Forum

We've been attending some of the Swansea Council hosted meetings of various walking groups in Swansea. There are a lot of rival walking groups in and around the city that offer shorter walks and are successful at signing up people who might otherwise become members of Swansea Ramblers. Also at the meetings are representatives from Llanelli Ramblers who are moving into Swansea to promote their shorter Swansea walks and increase their Llanelli membership with new Swansea recruits.

Future of Swansea Ramblers

If Swansea Ramblers is to have a long term future we need to be able to offer shorter easier walks to attract and retain people new to walking. At the moment we offer longer harder walks which do not encourage many new members. Without new people coming into the group we are already beginning to see a reduction in the walks we can offer. Our existing pool of leaders is getting smaller since many are at an age when they feel they can no longer lead walks for the group. We cannot and should not expect the remaining leaders to have to lead extra walks to fill the gaps in the programme.

New members encouraged into the group by the shorter walks may eventually find they enjoy the longer walks as well and will lead for us in the future. A few have already done so but we need more people to volunteer walks. Could you lead one short or long walk for the programme? If you'd like help to begin leading then we can always help you to learn how to do it and can suggest routes to use.

Lynne Esson has volunteered to co-ordinate a series of short walks and it is important that everyone supports these walks and maybe offers to lead one. If you know of anyone interested in going on these walks then pass the message on that we are running short walks this year.

We would also like to arrange themed short walks that explore the human or natural history of the local area. If you would like to lead such a walk or maybe give a talk while someone else leads, then let us know.

Weekend Away 2012

We went to Weymouth in May to walk parts of the South West Coast Path. The Jurassic Coast was beautiful and we had two days of glorious sunshine followed by heavy cold misty rain on the day we returned. Thanks to Mark Wolle, Karen Gibbs and Tim Gronow for leading the three walks.

Weekend Away 2013

The weekend away to Newquay in Cornwall is on the weekend of 17th – 20th May. These weekends away tend to be arranged a year in advance so contact Ian Smith (01792-368609) or Mark Wolle (07739 857825) if you are interested in going.

Its AGM time again!

Now come on! Don't glaze over and move hurriedly on! The AGM is your chance to have your say and meet the volunteers who get together each month to keep the group running. Then, like the committee, you can go over to the pub afterwards and socialise even more. Nibbles will be available at the end of the meeting and before the pub! The AGM takes place at the Environment Centre which is sandwiched down the side of the Evening Post offices and Morgan's Hotel. Come along on Wednesday, 17th October 2012 and the meeting will start at 7:00 p.m.

Its Glamorgan Area AGM time again!

The Area AGM takes place at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday 3rd November and is being held at the Ararat Centre, Plas Treoda, Whitchurch, Cardiff, CF14 1PT. Before it will be a short walk, starting at 10:00 a.m. and if previous years are anything to go by, there will be cakes and coffee available at lunchtime! Come and socialise with other groups to see what walks they lead.

Committee News

Zetta Flew has been our secretary for a number of years. She has long expressed a wish to step down and hand over the running of the group to someone new. She is therefore going to retire at the AGM in October.

This means we will need someone to volunteer to be our new secretary. We are not allowed to function without a secretary and if nobody comes forward to do the job, we have to start the process which would ultimately mean closing down Swansea Ramblers. Please consider if you could become our new secretary.

Lynne Lock will also be retiring as a committee member and we will need a volunteer to take on the role of footpath officer. Our thanks go to Lynne for all the hard work she has devoted to Swansea Ramblers over the years.

Assuming someone will volunteer to be secretary to keep the group going, there will be other vacancies on committee. The full list of vacant positions can be seen on the separate committee form posted with this newsletter but the programme co-ordinator vacancies are as follows:

- An organiser for Sunday long walks
- An organiser for Sunday short walks
- An organiser for the really short 1-3 mile walks that would attract new members,
- An organiser for evening walks such as those we've been enjoying this summer
- An organiser for the mid-week walks
- An organiser for different types of walks, such as our popular night walks or train walks.

Ramblers Cymru

The team in Cardiff are busy promoting Ramblers but could always do with a bit of help from volunteers. If you speak Welsh and fancy doing a stint at the Royal Welsh or Eisteddfod next year then we can put you in contact with them.

Ramblers Cymru has also picked up the Welsh Government's 'Lets Walk Cymru' initiative, now in its final year.

Walk in the Woods Week

The national Ramblers Walk in the Woods week runs from 27th October 2012 to 4th November 2012. As at the time of going to press, we hadn't had a volunteer to lead a woodland walk on our programme but if you fancy seeing some autumn tints then other groups may have something of interest. Perhaps next year you could lead an autumn walk to enjoy the changing seasons.

Swansea Ramblers web site

Don't forget we have a web site with details of programmed walks and photographs of previous ones. The news section tells you about what's been happening and the contact us pages tell you how to get in touch with the committee. There are self-guided walks to encourage people to begin walking. Remember when people ask you about the group to tell them we have a web site with all the information they need to begin walking with us.

Work Party

Bob Denley has been busy liaising with the council to organise path clearance on a regular basis. He has also designed a form for members to request path clearance when they spot a problem. This form is sent to the council for approval to work on the path and our team of path clearers get out there and sort the problem. If you find a problem on a path, give Bob a ring on 01792-371248 with details of the work needed and the grid reference of the path. You might even fancy coming along with the work party and doing a bit of clearance yourself! Volunteers are always welcomed to this necessary and fun task.

Annual Christmas Meal

Our annual dinner has been a success over the last few years and we have again booked the King Arthur in Reynoldston. This year the meal will be on 2nd December.

Thank you once more to Peter Jones for volunteering to lead a walk before the meal. Please note that we have again secured the use of a couple of spare guest bedrooms in order to change, shower and freshen up ready for the Christmas meal. Just bring soap and towels. Booking details are included with this letter.

See you on a walk,

Andrew Morgan