



Newsletter

Summer 2019

Hello,

Summer is on its way and yet again we have a great variety of walks lined up for members. Our thanks go out to all the leaders, coordinators and envelope stuffers who bring the programme together every six months to provide such enjoyable walking. Not to forget the continuing generosity of our member, Wayne Pulman who provides us with printing facilities free of charge.

Committee News

As many of you already know, 2018 marked the passing of our long-time Chair, Vernon Davies. Vernon worked tirelessly on committees to promote walking and to protect our rights to walk in the countryside. In later years Vernon was not able to be as active a participant in group walking as he would have liked so for many, the only time they would meet him was at the Christmas Dinner in the King Arthur.

The AGM in October gave us a new Chair; John France for some time has served us well as secretary and now he has taken on the role left vacant by Vernon. Catryn Edwards has volunteered to be our new secretary and Bob Denley is our new vice-chair. If anybody is interested in helping to run our group, let us know and we can tell you more about the committee's work. We would like to thank all existing and retiring members of committee for their work during their time with us.

Weekends Away 2019

The spring weekend away will be in April and we will be staying in Ross on Wye. There will be a long and a short walk each day to provide a variety of walks for members. In the autumn we will have another weekend away, this time to Shropshire where we will stay in the Ironbridge Gorge area for some more memorable walking.

Now where exactly is that meeting point?

We print the grid reference for each start point of a walk. This is usually sufficient to find the place but for a more exact position, we occasionally include the longitude and latitude coordinates (lon/lat) and Google Sat Nav directions. Another way to see on a map where to meet is to go to our web site and select the drop down menu for walks. The third option links to our walks on the national web site where you can see on the map where to meet.

What should we do when a leader is indisposed?

It happens to all of us! Whether on the day we are ill or one of a hundred other things has happened, sometimes we just can't lead that walk on the day. So how can Swansea Ramblers ensure that the show goes on and we lead that walk? There are two things we can all do as leaders: The main thing to do is to always recce a walk with somebody who will under normal circumstances be your back marker but if you are indisposed, they can take over leading the walk. The other thing to do is for leaders to volunteer to be on a standby list so the harassed coordinator can quickly ring around and find a replacement! If you can volunteer to do so then let me know and I'll keep a list. That said, we do encourage all leaders to begin to recce in pairs so that you know you have cover in case you are ill. (or have an accident on the recce!)

Booking a Social Event

Our regular staging of social events has become a popular added-membership benefit for many of our members. These events are well attended and often oversubscribed. Our social committee look forward to continuing to provide these activities but with the increase in administration these events generate, we will need to change slightly the way you book them.

From 2019, other than special events such as coach trips, we will only take pre-bookings approximately 6 weeks before an event takes place. The date booking opens will usually appear in the programme or on the email notification. (Exceptionally, if you happen to be away when booking is scheduled to begin, you will be able to book earlier).

During 2018, our committee has been receiving bookings (and payment!) well in advance of the events. Booking too early generates queries from members who cannot remember if they did prepay or what their menu choices were. To reduce the number of queries raised, we would be grateful if members could make a note of when they have paid and their menu choices. (*Perhaps by making a diary entry or other note on your phone/email?*).

Membership

Membership of Swansea Ramblers continues to grow (around 430 members) as more people discover how enjoyable group walking can be - but at the same time, we do lose members who for one reason or another do not renew their membership. So while the trend is still a healthy growth, we all need to keep promoting Swansea Ramblers to friends, colleagues and anybody we think would benefit from the socialising and exercise that being a member offers.

Strange as it may seem to us, the majority of the public have no idea what a Rambler is and have no concept of how easy it is to walk from A-B. For those who have never been for a walk, all they know of the countryside is what they see from the car window as they drive along. Our charitable aim is to get people walking and we can all do our part to promote that idea in the minds of the public.

Work Party

Our work party is still doing its bit to keep us walking and have been clearing paths, some of which have not been walkable in a long time. If you would like to help clear paths (*and it can be very therapeutic and rewarding to hack your way through the undergrowth!*) then let us know. We could be walking down a path you cleared very soon!

Footpaths

Hendrefoilan: Many of the paths we walk in 'central' Swansea were never given legal protection when path registration took place in the 1950s. Swansea as an urban borough did not have to register paths and chose not to do so. A new public enquiry to determine that public footpaths do actually exist in the Hendrefoilan area has been cancelled and instead, the inspector will receive written evidence from the public. If you have walked the area then any statement or evidence you may wish to submit should be submitted by 5th April 2019. The current path under consideration is DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER NO. 472 2016 HENDREFOILAN ROAD TO WAUNARLWYDD ROAD.

GDPR – The dreaded GDPR!

There are around 100 members who used to receive group updates but since GDPR have not re-consented to continue to receive them. This means you are missing out on socials, walk changes/cancellations and other group news.

To re-register for emails, all you have to do is phone central membership (020 3961 3232) or go online (<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/login.aspx>) and consent to emails, phone and post. Did you know that if you have unsubscribed from any marketing material from central office then you are removed from the local email list as well! Something to think about before unsubscribing to a Ramblers-related piece of marketing.

Figure of eight walks

Another new initiative that may both encourage people to start walking and provide additional walking opportunities for members are the 'Figure of Eight' walks. These are two walks in one where a separate morning short walk meets in the same car park as the afternoon short walk. This provides an opportunity for members to just do a morning walk and have the rest of the day free **OR** if they cannot do the morning e.g. have chapel/church/caring duties, they can come along in the afternoon. Other members wanting a full day out can do both walks with a lunch stop back at the cars. There will be three of these walks on the summer programme. If you can, please support them and let friends and colleagues know that if they would like to begin walking, these may be suitable for them. If you could lead similar walks on future programmes, please contact me.

Project Walks

Any leader out there who wishes to do a series of walks? We haven't done the Pembrokeshire Coast Path for a while and there are loads of long distance paths that may be good to do. Have a think about it for the next programme or even next summer.

See you on a walk,

Andrew Morgan