



Newsletter

August - November 2023

Chair's Notes

Hi everyone, it seems another 4 months have passed since the last Newsletter and the autumn programme is now published, although it takes quite a while to get leaders for the various walks. Several of you have "stepped up to the plate" and begun leading, but the need for volunteers to lead a walk is still a major issue when planning the programme, so always consider this when enjoying a Group walk led by a fellow member.

The previous RA website Walks Manager called "Gwem" has now been taken off-line and we have the new one called "Walks Manager". Your Walks Editor Geoff, has worked ceaselessly on this to post our walks programme online for the benefit of all Ramblers and no doubt many non-RA members. The RA had as always underestimated the complexity of any website changes; at the time of writing, problems still exist.

The weather surely will remain better than the late winter rains, but hopefully it won't be as hot as last summer. The Saffron Trail, arranged by the C&B Group, has had the first 3-day part completed with around 8 of our members walking and leading some stages. The second 3-day part is planned for later this year. Personally, I've not been able to walk very much since Christmas due to the scourge of Ramblers: the plantar fasciitis problem, which can be very painful I assure you.

A week away in early May at Bradford arranged by Geoff and Chris was an outstanding success. The walks were very enjoyable, although I only managed to do the first 4 days' walks. Despite some drizzle the Yorkshire weather was generally good to us, as hopefully the rest of the year will be.

I'm sure many of you will look forward to the Group's away trips in the future.

Happy walking,

Brian Scroggs

News and Views

Important Update from Walks Programme Editor

Included with this Newsletter is our Walks Programme for the next 4 months. It is in the old familiar format for you to print and keep. However, it is worth bearing in mind that this can become outdated and is only correct on the date of publication. A version is available on our website but we do not update it after publication.

There are a number of dates (especially Tuesdays) for which we have no walk details available for the published programme but which we hope will be filled later. It is important that members watch for Mailchimp messages with details of new walks and any other Programme changes.

Many members now rely on our website and the RA smartphone app to keep up to date with our walks and we encourage you to check these sources regularly to be sure that you have the most up to date walks information.

Having said that, the RA has updated the software used to publish walks online and there are a few bugs in the system so you may find things look a little different to what you've seen before. There is a long list of developments which RA staff are working through but it may take some time!

Probably most significant is that the leader's name will not be displayed on many walks. For a name and contact details to appear each leader must log into their RA account and give permission so, if you are a leader, please try to correct this or contact one of the Rambles Secretaries or myself for help.

Another issue is that the RA main website will not display walks in chronological order, although this seems to be OK on the Brentwood Ramblers website.

More minor niggles include:

- The inability of the new system to cope with "special" characters so, for example, a car park charge has to be 4GBP instead of £4.
- Walk finishing times are mandatory so we have to publish something even if it's very approximate and sometimes it seems to default to midday.
- Finishing locations are mandatory for linear walks even if the leader has not decided the exact route before publication.
- The smartphone app seems to display 2 versions of a walk if the details have been changed after original publication.

Please be patient as we await improvements and don't shoot the messenger!!

Geoff Sharman

Stay Safe

After an incident on Sunday 5 March involving a lost/ill walker in Danbury, Essex Police, Chelmsford District, are stressing on Facebook the importance of having what3words on your phone - free for iOS/Android and might save a life (as well as being useful for finding walk starts) - download it now!

When I attended a navigation course a while ago it was stressed that it is really important to download OS Locate (another free app). The information each app gives will be of vital use to the emergency services and may even be able to save lives.

Linda Dawson



Photo: Linda Dawson

John Gregory's Coggleshall walk 28 February

Bookable and Forthcoming Events

Save the date! Sunday 17 September 2023

We will be hosting the London Blind Ramblers group again and volunteers will be needed.

Frankie Carpenter

Eastbourne, Sussex October (3 nights)

Thirty of us have booked for the weekend away at the Queens Hotel. We stayed there in October 2016 - it is an imposing Victorian property on the seafront in a great position directly opposite the pier.

Chris Green

Saffron Trail Walk Part 2 Wednesday 25 – Friday 27 October

Invitation from C & B Group

We will be completing the Saffron Trail in October in 3 consecutive days of walking between Wednesday 25 and Friday 27 October (school half-term week). Having covered 40 miles of the route in the recent Part 1 walk we will be joining forces with Brentwood Ramblers again to pick up the Trail near Sandford Mill and walk the remaining 32 miles to Southend Pier.
below.

Regards, ***Peter Jepson***

Chairman Chelmer & Blackwater

candbchair@gmail.com

Christmas Lunch December

As it's been so successful in the past, the Brentwood Ramblers' Christmas Lunch this year will again be held at Bentley Golf Club, Kelvedon Hatch. The cost will be £27 for 3 courses, coffee and mince pies, and service. (Drinks not included.)

Chris Green/Ruth Hannon

AGM Keep the date free – Agenda to follow

The AGM will be held at Shenfield Parish Hall (followed, of course, by wine and mince pies!), on Thursday 7 December at 7.30 pm. Further details to follow in the next Newsletter.

Ruth Hannon

Past Events

Coach Ramble from Cadmore End to Henley on Thames Sunday 2 April



Photos: Paula Howard

Our first coach ramble of the year was well supported: 45 ramblers boarded the coach for the trip to Buckinghamshire. After several weeks of rain, the forecast was for a dry day at last!

The longer walk started at Cadmore End and finished at Henley-on-Thames. The shorter walk explored the countryside and hills behind the town. There was also an opportunity for those who did not walk to spend the day in Henley-on-Thames.

The longer walk joined The Chiltern Way passing through woods, and ascending hills with lovely views of the surrounding countryside. We arrived at the pretty village of Hambledon for lunch just as the clouds dispersed and the sun came out. There was a churchyard for those with a picnic, a pub and a small convenience store/café - something for everyone.



The afternoon's walk proved challenging as we approached the River Thames; the fields and footpaths were flooded. We had to backtrack and take a short diversion via the weir at Hambledon Lock. The river was very high and fast-flowing with areas of white-water, quite a sight. After crossing over the weir we joined the towpath and walked into Henley-on-Thames to pick up the coach.

Our thanks go to Miles Cooper for organising the day and leading the longer walk, to John Williams for being the back marker, and to Les Cox for leading the shorter walk. Everyone enjoyed the day and we look forward to our next coach ramble.

Jane Green

Bradford and Yorkshire Dales 29 April to 6 May 2023



This was one of our most varied holidays in terms of landscape. At times we were on wild unspoilt moors or clambering down steep slopes and at others by peaceful canals or wandering through picturesque villages. We also saw evidence of the industrial landscape of the past in the mills and tall chimneys.

Sunday's walk gave us all of these in one day. We started in Crossflats walking by the Leeds and Liverpool canal and saw the Bingley Five Rise Locks, the steepest staircase of locks on the canal network. Those doing the shorter walk went into the model industrial village of Saltaire founded by Sir Titus Salt and now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Those on the longer walk went up onto Ilkley Moor where the rain provided a suitable atmosphere for the bleak landscape around the 12 Apostles stone circle. Those familiar with the folk song 'On Ilkley Moor Baht 'At can be assured that 'ats were worn!



On Bank Holiday Monday we got a chance to ride a steam train to Oxenthorpe on the Keighley and Worth Valley railway. There was a shorter walk into Haworth, home of the Brontë sisters, and a longer walk to include the waterfalls with some steep paths. Tuesday we went to Hebden Bridge and walked to Hardcastle Crag, through beautiful woodland and then the longer walk went on to Lumb Hole Falls and back to Hebden Bridge. I enjoyed seeing the setting of some of Ted Hughes poems and hearing the curlews.

On Wednesday we had good weather for our riverside walk along to the ruins of Bolton Abbey. There was a particularly good cafe there. By Thursday I was finding the Yorkshire hills very steep and opted for the canal side walk but others went up Flasby Fell where a strong wind threatened to blow them down from the Trig point!



A poor forecast for Friday caused a rethink about going up a 400m hill to Stoodley Pike. I chose to join the walk along the Rochdale Canal from Todmorden to Hebden Bridge and then on to Sowerby Bridge. It was a particularly lovely stretch of canal with well-kept villages on the way. Ducklings and goslings were looking very photogenic. We even got to visit a clog factory. Others in the group went to York for the day or explored the area around Bradford.

Our base was The Great Victoria Hotel in Bradford, an imposing Victorian building conveniently opposite the train and bus station. Highlights during the week were a very convivial trip to one of Bradford's curry restaurants and the unexpected appearance of Star Wars characters one evening. (Star Wars Day - May the 4th be with you!)



Many thanks to our walk leaders Chris, Geoff, Colin, Les, Lorraine and Brian for leading walks in unfamiliar places, and to Geoff and Chris for all the organisation that these holidays entail.

Frankie Carpenter

Saffron Trail Walk Wednesday 25 – Friday 27 October

At the end of May we had the pleasure of walking the first half of the Saffron Trail over 3 days, which was organised in collaboration with Chelmer & Blackwater Group. Starting in Saffron Walden, the Trail took us through rolling countryside with an abundance of blossom and spring/summer flowers.

We passed through a number of pretty villages (including Newport, Broxted, Great Easton and Great Waltham to name but a few), ending with a lovely walk along the Chelmer.

In particular, I would like to thank our Brentwood walk leaders, Geoff Sharman and Mike Wheatley, who did a superb job, and I'm already looking forward to walking the Saffron Trail part 2 in October.

Chris Johnson

Footpath Secretary

Essex County Council Orders

The Essex Bridleways Association has made an application to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by the addition of a public bridleway along Hole Farm Lane from Warley Road to Codham Hall Lane and to include the upgrade of a section of Footpath 110. In making this application reference was made to historic documents over 200 years. It is a very detailed application which Essex County Council has decided to allow and has stated 'An order giving effect to this decision will be made and served in due course. There will be a public right of objection to the Order which does not take effect until it is confirmed'. If successful, this will be of benefit to walkers as well as horse riders.

Order issued by Essex CC to temporarily close Footpath 25, Ingatestone & Fryerning in the Borough of Brentwood, from its junction with Hardings Lane south for approximately 260 metres.

The closure is scheduled to commence on 9 May 2023 to 9 November 2023 or where appropriate signs are showing and weather permitting. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while the replacement of fencing alongside footpath is undertaken.

The alternative route will be via Footpath 25, Footpath 26, Footpath 20, Footpath 10 and vice versa. The Order will come into effect on 9 May 2023 and may continue in force for 6 months or until the works have been completed, whichever is the earlier.

Kelvedon Hatch Bridleway 275-1 – School Road to Langford Bridge

The recent installation of a high metal mesh fence limits access to the bridleway for a distance of about 400m at Clapgate. (See previous Newsletters for further details). Kelvedon Parish Council representatives met the land owner and discussed the matter however there appeared to be no simple resolution to the issue. Claiming the path under the '20 year' rule is now being considered. To support this evidence from people who have used the path over the last 20-50 years will be required. If you, or you know of others, who have had experience of walking the path during this period please let me know.

Parish Path Adopter Programme

Now spring is underway growing vegetation can quickly restrict access to the Public Right of Way Network. This month, in addition to our usual surveying, we intend to focus on cross field paths, feeding back problems found to Essex Highways for resolution. We would like to get all members involved in this initiative and have simplified the procedure for reporting these problems. Please go to Essex Area website and under Latest Article see 'Make May Crossfield Paths Month'. Give it a go.

Gordon Bird

Footpath Working Party - The Brentwood Bramblers



Joan Chandler and Mark Burgess busy putting a couple of disks on a new waymarker post near Crow Green (TQ581967) on 20th March 2023

We have been busy as usual with footpath clearing, including installing a new footbridge on top of an old one! The footbridge concerned is between Fingrith Hall Lane and Spriggs Lane, just north east of Blackmore. Our jolly maintenance team often see the path not visible because of the growth but, at the end of the morning's work, it is cleared again - not always as we do often have to return and finish the job.

We do stop during the work to consume our refreshments and at the end some of

us pop off to a nearby pub/cafe for a drink and a social chat.

Miles Cooper

Rambles Secretaries' Notes

Saturdays

The numbers continue to be consistently good and we welcome 2 new leaders to the programme, for which I am very grateful! Mary Wiley is leading from Wivenhoe and Kevin Reeve has led from Langdon Hills. Many thanks to them both for stepping into the breach!

Dianne Ingram

Change of Address

If you move home, please remember to let **Ramblers** know: 020 7339 8500
ramblers@london.ramblers.org.uk

Health and Safety

Please see link to the Ramblers website <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/advice-for-walkers/safety-and-equipment/personal-safety.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE! *In view of the fact that occasionally we have had to cancel walks through adverse weather conditions and move a start point of another walk for other reasons PLEASE note our advice at the beginning of the programme and phone the leader of the walk if you have any doubts about it taking place. We do try to warn you of any changes via email, on the website or by announcements on walks, but it is not always possible to ensure that all our members are informed. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.*

Next Committee Meeting

24 July