



RAMBLERS

Brentwood

Newsletter

August – November 2024

Chair's Notes

Summertime is now with us and when walking it's unlikely you will need additional layers to keep warm, although I can't say the same for needing rain gear.

It was a great shame that the April coach ramble had to be cancelled, but with the terrible weather we previously had it would have been a disaster if the mud and impassable paths had ruined the day for everyone. Additionally, the coach cost would have been forfeited if we had cancelled at the last minute.

However, what a week we had at Bournemouth in May. The walks and excursions were so well planned and enjoyable, an open top bus ride across Studland ferry and a steam train to Swanage being highlights. The food, the hotel and service were very good.

The October weekend is the next thing to look forward to and it's worth checking to see if any vacancies exist.

The Essex Area committee have now changed their priorities to focus on footpath matters only and Essex County Council (ECC) have published their path cutting schedule which can now be seen online. This may help many areas where no Ramblers or local Parish clearance team exists. With massive cuts in spending by ECC we as Ramblers might have to ultimately accept that many paths will be obstructed in some way because staff and money are not available. You could of course do your bit and carry and use secateurs when you are out walking.

Please note that this year's AGM will be on a Saturday afternoon so keep an eye out for the details later.

That's all for now, so make the most of the summer walks.

Brian Scroggs

Past Events

Bournemouth Holiday 19 – 15 May

In May, 28 Brentwood ramblers enjoyed 5 days in Dorset, staying at the Norfolk Royale Hotel which was ideally placed for exploring the area. We were lucky with the weather, only having one afternoon of rain during our stay. The fancy dress theme this year was “The Far East” and a good variety of costumes were on show.



Our first walk, in glorious sunshine, was to the interesting village of Christchurch. We found the “Ducking Stool” beside the river (no volunteers) and walked past the Castle ruins and Priory. We then followed the River Stour through a nature reserve and on to Hengistbury Head with far reaching views of the coast.

On the second day we took the Stour Valley Way inland to the attractive market town of Wimborne. On the way we visited The Vine Inn (NT), famous for having one of the smallest bars in the country. We had time for a quick visit to Wimborne Minster, parts of which date from AD705, before continuing the last few miles.

Day 3 was an excellent ridge walk along the Purbeck Hills following the Purbeck Way with views of Swanage to the west and Poole Harbour to the east. We descended past Corfe Castle into the picturesque village of Corfe to catch the steam train back to Swanage.



On day 4 we walked through Poole Park and along to Poole Quay where we boarded The Purbeck Gem boat for a cruise up the River Frome to the lovely village of Wareham. There was time for refreshments and a short walk before returning to Poole.

For the last day we followed the Bourne River inland with lunch at “The Barking Cat Alehouse”. There was a comprehensive menu to study with a huge choice of ales and ciders available to try. The afternoon was spent walking the length of Branksome Chine back to the coast and a well-earned ice-cream.

Our thanks go to Chris Green for organising the holiday and to the walk leaders, Goeff, Kevin, Colin and Chris.

Jane Green

Bookable and Forthcoming Events

Blind Ramblers Walk 15 September

Once again we will be hosting the London Blind Ramblers Group and will need volunteer guides. The group travel from London to Brentwood with helpers. Some are partially sighted and some blind. They vary in how much assistance they need but will explain how you can help.

We will walk to Thorndon country park. Some prefer to stop at the visitors’ centre and some enjoy a longer walk of about 7 miles.

Our guests like to chat and share our enthusiasm for rambling in the countryside. They are always very grateful to the Ramblers groups who invite them.

Frankie Carpenter

Nelson Mandela Way

I had to cancel the walk on 2 June 2024 (section 4) due to engineering works and have reinstated it to Sunday 1 September 2024. Unfortunately, the lunch stop pub called “The Case is Altered” recently closed. New arrangements: lunch after 6 miles, bring food and drink; drink at a golf club after 8 miles. Section 4 of the walk continues southwest crossing a busy airport runway and the M1 and finishes at Hatch End Train Station. You can use your Oyster for the journey home. Breakfast at the excellent Café Radlett which is very near the station in Watling St. Dinner: restaurant in central London.

The fifth section of the walk takes place on Sunday 29 September 2024. Meet at Wetherspoons “Moon and Sixpence” (good cooked breakfast £2.25) in Uxbridge Road. Exit Hatch End Train Station, continue straight ahead to Uxbridge Road, turn right, 4 minutes’ walk to the pub. Lunch en route, bring food and drink. Drink at the picturesque alfresco café called “Café @ Lock 81” after 7 ½ miles or at the “Café in the Park” if inclement weather, after 8 ¼ miles. Section 5 of the walk goes through Oxhey Woods and along the Grand Union Canal and part of the Colne Valley Trail to Rickmansworth. The walk finishes at Rickmansworth Tube Station. You can use your Oyster for the journey home. Dinner: restaurant central London.

Colin Raven

Saltmarsh Coast Walking Festival: 27 September - 6 October

This is a free event highlighting 75 miles of the Saltmarsh Coast, giving an opportunity to explore the countryside, coastal scenery and historic towns of the Maldon District. A variety of guided walks by local experts are planned and self-guided routes are available for those who wish to walk at their own pace.

For full details please check on-line.

Linda Dawson

Brentwood Ramblers Autumn Holiday 2024 (4 nights)

A few places are currently available. Details of the holiday are in the April-July Newsletter and on our Members’ website. If you are interested, please contact me.

Chris Green

Keep the day!

We were asked at last year's AGM why we could not hold it during the day so this year the AGM will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 30 November at Blackmore Village Hall. There will be a walk on offer in the morning. Further details will be printed in the next Newsletter.

Ruth Hannon

A date for your 2025 diary!!

We are in the process of putting together a trip to Jersey next May but as yet do not have specific details; please bear it in mind when planning your hols.

The intention is to organise 5 days or more in a hotel in Jersey, travelling by coach to Poole and a ferry across to the island. There's plenty to do apart from lots of lovely walks, eg vineyards, the German tunnels, cream teas, etc etc.

Once we've put the package together we shall let you know!

Dianne Ingram

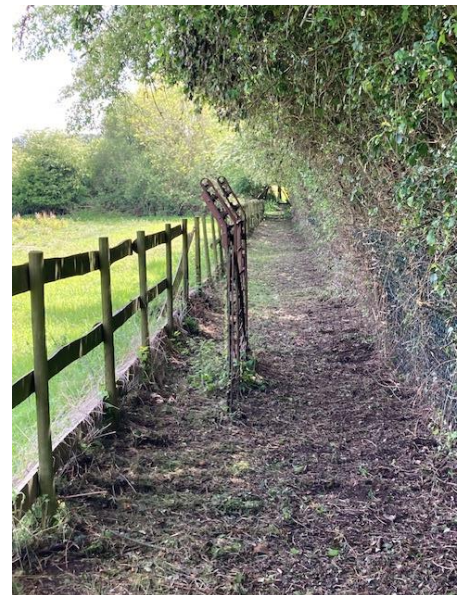
Footpath Working Party - The Brentwood Bramblers



I have now taken over from Miles as Workparty Co-ordinator. Firstly, I would like to thank Miles for all the work he has done over these past years. I am fortunate to have inherited a good working system and an excellent team (except one).

So far this year we have been replacing damaged/missing waymarker posts, repairing broken bridges and clearing overgrown footpaths. Recently we cleared a footpath between houses which had been reported by the neighbours as being difficult to use due to badly

overgrown nettles. After clearing away the nettles somebody complained that we had now made it easier for burglars to enter the gardens!!!! You just can't please everybody.



Photos: Roy Quince 15 and 22 April FP 24 Doddinghurst Road near Brentwood centre.

Don Clark

Footpath Secretary

The wet weather of the past few weeks has hindered the surveying of many local footpaths. However, I did manage to check those in Kelvedon Hatch, Stondon Massey and some in Doddinghurst and Brentwood, and was pleasantly surprised at how few problems I encountered. Unfortunately, this situation could well change as the warmer weather promotes the rapid growth of vegetation. I now take secateurs each time I go for a walk – just in case I come across those rather nasty brambles. Essex Highways do have a planned cutting

schedule (see their website), however, they are behind due to difficulties in getting equipment on site; hopefully this will only be a short term issue.

Under the Parish Path Adopter (PPA) programme we, like last year, focused on cross field paths and found fewer issues than in previous years. I suspect this was due to Essex Highways reminding land owners of their duty to keep paths clear of crops. If you encounter problems on a cross field path, please submit a fault report on the Essex Highways website and let me know.

Regarding PPA, volunteers are still needed as there are parts of Brentwood district not being surveyed on an annual basis. It is not a difficult or time-consuming exercise. Let me know if you can help.

On other matters: the Lower Thames Crossing has been delayed – yet again. However, the Norwich to Tilbury Great Grid Upgrade is in its planning and consultation phase. Both Essex Area and Ramblers Central Office have reviewed the plans and submitted their views. For those who are not aware, this project is part of the Government's 'Green, net zero' agenda and involves installing hundreds of pylons across the Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Thurrock countryside. Unfortunately, the PROW network will be affected. For further information on this project and the proposed line of pylons, go to <https://www.nationalgrid.com/>.

Gordon Bird

Rambles Secretaries' Notes

Tuesdays

This is my first programme as Tuesday Walks Secretary. I'd like to thank Colin Banner for all of his support during the handover and for his patience in answering all of my many questions!

Thank you to the walks leaders who have offered walks to help fill the spaces in the April-July programme.

We still have a number of gaps in the August-November programme, if anyone would like to offer a walk.

Paula Howard

Wednesdays

The Wednesday evening walks have got off to a good start this year. They will run through to the first week of September when the final walk will be the traditional fish and chip walk. We will start in Leigh on Sea and walk along the coast to Southend pier. Fish and chips can be bought and then those who want to can walk back or take public transport for the return.

Our Wednesday walks have been joined sometimes by Alba my hearing dog. Although she prefers walks off the lead where she can chase rabbits and squirrels, she has enjoyed these shorter rambles and all the attention of her fellow ramblers.

Frankie Carpenter

Saturdays

With it having been the wettest spring for years, our numbers have not been huge, averaging around 17. However, we've got a couple of new Start points on this programme so I am hoping that will spark more interest!

It's been really difficult to get enough leaders this time round due to having lost 5 people through bad health, myself included! We really do need new people up front and unless we get some extra volunteers we will see more and more gaps in the programme. It really is not fair to expect the same leaders to do more and more walks each time, so if you feel like having a go but are not sure of how to go about it, please get in touch with any of the organisers and we'll talk you through it and help with plotting a route, walking it out and leading it on the day. Please give it some thought.

Many thanks to all those who tirelessly volunteer every time.

Dianne Ingram

Webmaster's Notes

I have great pleasure in announcing that Barry Sharpen has agreed to join us as a Website Administrator and Facebook Editor. Barry brings a great wealth of IT skills to the Committee and I am sure we will benefit from improvements he can make to the Website Presentation.

Steve Johnson

I have been working with Steve on a new page for the Website to promote our walks and we are putting this on Facebook:

Brentwood Ramblers Walks

We organise regular walks each Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. During the summer, we also walk each Wednesday evening. These evening walks are 2-hour short walks. It's a chance to unwind, meet new people and discover nature on your doorstep.

We hope to see you at a Brentwood Ramblers' walk sometime soon.

<https://www.brentwoodramblers.org.uk/walks/wednesday-evening.html>

Barry Sharpen

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.*

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>