

South Cotswold Ramblers' Group

Newsletter - October 2021

Published normally in February, June and October. We look forward to hearing from you with stories, opinions, photos, poetry, art, funny tales, cartoons, appeals, you name it. This edition was edited by Sally 01453 872729, email: newsletter@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

OUR FIRST POST-COVID NEWSLETTER OR WE'RE UP AND RUNNING (OR RATHER WALKING!)

First there was staying at home, like prison, then there was walking with 1 person, which seemed a lifeline for a while until eventually that got a bit limiting ("Can't you talk about something else other than your family, your house, your pets, your meals? Can't you talk about what you've done" - except you hadn't done anything!)

So when we were allowed to walk in groups of 6, this seemed as if the world had opened up, until there were these issues of diplomacy - "Who do we ask? Will so-and-so be offended if they're not included? Will they find out?"

So when Group Walks were given the go-ahead, all these dilemmas disappeared. *Slowly, slowly* leaders came forward and put a walk on our rolling programme. Some only got a couple of brave walkers turning up, one poor leader got no-one (on the positive side, at least that walk can be reused at a later date!) But gradually our loyal leaders are coming out of the woodwork and the numbers on walks have increased. On 4 October there were 19. There seems to have been more support for shorter walks - have we all got lazy, not walked a lot, or just got older? However there are more longer walks on this next programme. We can only do what leaders want to do. Anyway we have a full programme for November and December, but soon it will be time to think towards January and February. Please don't assume that those same leaders who have stepped up to the plate will want to do so again so soon (though clearly we hope they will). *Sally*

OUR AGM IS ON SATURDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 6.30 VIA ZOOM.

You will be emailed a link a couple of days beforehand. The AGM paperwork starts on page 5

Sorry, no cakes. These will have to do:





Turnout has definitely got better from our first walk in April. Nineteen out on 4th October.



GROUP VOLUNTEERS 2021

Chair:

Ann 07931114439

chair@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Vice Chair:

Sally 07818425088

sally@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Group Secretary:

Andrew 01452 857958

groupsecretary@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Group Treasurer:

Brian W 01453 872220

treasurer@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Membership Secretary:

Ros 07752397855

membership@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Publicity Officer:

Vacant

Without portfolio:

Richard

Website: Mike* & Sally

website@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

South Cots Newsletter: Sally

newsletter@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Footpath Chairman and Footpath Secretary:

Malcolm

footpaths@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Led Walks Programme Co-ordinator:

*Mike 01453 873625

mike@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

*Mike will be giving up these roles in the near future

NEWS FOR WALK LEADERS

No need to keep a record for Track and Trace

In case you are not aware, there is no longer the requirement to take a register of people attending your walk.

Risk Assessment

You do need to complete a Risk Assessment form which you can find on the Leaders page of our website. It is the simplest Risk Assessment ever! However, Ramblers currently require you to keep this for 3 years!!! Who thought that up!! Local groups including Gloucestershire Area Ramblers are challenging this. It does not have to be kept as a paper copy, you can keep it on your computer (and just hope your computer doesn't need replacing within 3 years!)

We need you

More than ever we need leaders to come forward or there will be a reduced number of walks. Until February we are running a 2 monthly walks programme instead of our pre-Covid 4 monthly one. We have found leaders for November and December, but they might not be willing to lead twice as often as previously.

January and February walks programme

We will be starting to collect dates for January and February in the middle of November to give our new walks co-ordinator time to get to grips with the job, so please don't leave all submissions to the last minute!



Going away with Ramblers Holidays?

Group members booking a holiday with Ramblers, or their other partners including Chapters Experience Holidays, Adagio and Load Off Your Back can nominate South Cotswold Ramblers group to benefit from a donation. As long as the holiday takes place then the group will receive payment as per the table below

Holiday Type – Contribution

UK holidays - £10 per person booked

Short haul holidays - £20 per person booked

Long haul holidays - £30 per person booked

For more information visit our Message Board or <https://www.ramblersholidays.co.uk/responsible-tourism/the-walking-partnership>

If you want to put anything in the next newsletter which goes out in December please contact Sally at newsletter@southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

THANK YOU

Thank you to the people who have come forward with their email addresses to enable us to send out walks programmes, newsletters etc. electronically. The difficulty of foreseeing even a month ahead during the pandemic has meant that we have had to put together short term programmes of walks, rather than our usual 4-monthly ones. This has increased the frequency and therefore the cost of posting to the few people who receive paper copies. We have resorted where possible to using volunteers to deliver these by hand to reduce the cost so thank you to those volunteers. If anyone else who receives paper copies would like to change to emailed ones, please contact Ros, our membership secretary on ramblersros@gmail.com

FLY-TIPPING

As you know on walks we can and do come across items large, small and often surprising which have been dumped in the lanes and pathways.

Most recently we came across a bed mattress which someone had dumped in a lane in Cirencester. Through contacts I found a very active Cotswold District offshoot set up to deal with the fly tipping scourge. This particular group's working area is Cotswold District, Forest of Dean and West Oxon.

This is not much help if you want to report fly-tippers in the Stroud area.

But with a little bit of internet searching I found the following website

<https://www.stroud.gov.uk/report/report-fly-tipping-dumped-litter>

How active the Stroud team are I can't say but worth trying.

Ron

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Terry, Alison & Nick, Debra, Richard, Peter & Tracy, Chas, Lyn & Paul, Shaun, Caroline & Tom, Ann, David & S Pike, Claire & Matthew, David, Phil & Elizabeth, Loren & Harry, Diane and Brian.

Ros (Membership Secretary)

THE DANGER OF WALKING POLES

Those of you who know me know I am not a fan of walking poles, so I was interested to read an article in The Times that said:

Hiker, 53, falls to his death after tripping on trekking poles

A Dutch hiker fell 100 metres to his death in the French Vosges mountains after tripping over his walking sticks.

Just a thought. Take care. *Sally*

Invitation to our Annual General Meeting

October 2021

Dear Members,

We warmly invite you to the **South Cotswold Ramblers' Group ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** on Thursday 13 Nov 2021 at 18:30 (via Zoom).

A link to Zoom will be emailed out to you a couple of days in advance.

All of you are most welcome.

At the meeting Reports and Plans are discussed. Then all committee members stand down and are eligible to seek re-election as officers or committee members. We look forward to welcoming new people too. Posts will be as shown in last year's minutes overleaf.

Please do come. We look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hawkins

Group Secretary (01452 857958)

SOUTH COTSWOLD RAMBLERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 13 NOVEMBER 2021

AT 18:30
(via Zoom)

AGENDA

1. Brief welcome by the Group Chairman, Ann Adams
2. Apologies for absence which have been notified to the Secretary before the meeting
3. Approval of the minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting (attached)
4. Matters arising not likely to be covered in reports below and notified to the Secretary before the meeting
5. Adoption of the 2020 – 2021 Reports (already circulated)
 - a) Chairman's Report
 - b) Footpath Secretary's Report
 - c) Treasurer's Report
6. Election of Officers and Committee Members to comprise en-bloc re-election of last year's officers (see minutes)
7. Appointment of Honorary Auditor
8. Motions of which notice has been received by 31 October 2021
9. Any other business notice of which has been given in writing to the secretary prior to the meeting

AGM MINUTES 21 JANUARY 2021

Everyone was welcomed by the Chairman, Richard Davis.

1. Present

Richard Davis (Chairman), Mike Garner (Vice-Chairman), Andrew Hawkins (Secretary) , Brian Witcombe (Treasurer), Sally Davis, Penny Fernando, Jim White, Diana Davis, Ann Adams, Gwen Chaney, Susan Jones, Peter Jones, Ron Burnip, Ros Burnip, Margaret Turner, Olivia Gunn, Michele Holden, Janet Hale, Sue Clark, Lawrence Arnall, Charlie Morriss, Bruno Pacini, Bernard Gill (Area Chairman), Karen D'Amico, Malcolm Taylor (Footpath Secretary), Jill Stuart, Mary Hall, Jane Rowe

2. Apologies

James Skinner, Linda Skinner, Lenneke Jansens, Bernard Smith, Angela Marks, Patrick Marks, Fiona Chandler

3. Agreement of the Minutes of 2019 AGM

The minutes were approved as accurate and signed by the Chairman, Richard Davis.

4. Matters Arising

There were no Matters arising from the previous meeting.

5. Annual Reports

5a Chairman's Report

- Richard Davis's report was printed in the Newsletter.

5b Footpath Secretary's Report

- Malcom Taylor's report was printed in the Newsletter.

5c Treasurer's Report

- Accounts were printed in the Newsletter.

The reports 5a, 5b, and 5c were accepted and this was proposed by Janet Hale and Brian Witcombe.

6. Election of Officers and Committee Members

Officer	Nomination	Proposed	Seconded
Group Chairman	Ann Adams)	
Vice Chairman	Sally Davis)	
Hon Secretary	Andrew Hawkins)	
Hon Treasurer	Brian Witcombe)	
Membership Secretary	Ros Burnip)	
Newsletter Editor	Sally Davis)	
Joint Website Editor	Sally Davis)	
Joint Website Editor	Mike Garner)	Block Vote
Walks Programme Coordinator	Mike Garner)	Sue Jones Jim White
Publicity Officer	Vacant)	
Committee Members	Richard Davis)	

Footpath Support Group

Footpath Chairman	Malcolm Taylor)	
Footpath Secretary	Malcolm Taylor)	Block Vote
Footpath Vice Chairman	Vacant)	
Footpath Minutes Secretary	John Corry)	Sue Jones Jim White
Committee Members	Penny Fernando)	
	Charlie Morriss)	
	Gwen Chaney)	

Area Council Rep's	Penny Fernando)	Block Vote
	Richard Davis)	Sue Jones Jim White

7. Appointment of Hon Independent Examiner (Auditor)

- Steve Priddey to continue as the Auditor.

Proposed by Richard Davis and Seconded by Andrew Hawkins

8. Motions Received by the Due Date

There were no Motions.

9. Any Other Business

There were no any other business given in writing to the Secretary prior to the meeting.

Any Other Business discussed on the night:

- Don't Lose Your Way project – Charlie Morriss is asking for help at group level with this project. He has been heavily involved with this at Area level. He did mention a very useful book "Rights of Way Restoring the Record" which provides a lot of information. Penny Fernando is already involved. She is quite happy with the South Cots Area. Claims will be greatly received for paths that are being use that are not on definitive maps. There are 2 lists of Public Rights of Ways (PROW) - one of tarmac roads and paths and on other PRO such as footpaths, bridleways, by-ways, green lanes etc. Bob Frewin to be asked for his help and the valuable information that he has. Jane Rowe asked "Have we approached Stroud Rambling Club?" She will ask 2 people that she knows who has knowledge of the Stroud area. Peter and Sue Jones can help out in the Dursley area. Charlie Morris will let the Secretary have his contact details via e-mail.
- Bernard Gill (Area Chairman) –asked for a footpath team for the Severn Vale area. He also mention that the Area AGM is being held on Saturday 16 January 2021. They have a 4 year limit for officers in post. He also thanked all of the work that Richard Davis has done over the years as Group Chairman.
- Michele Holden (Area Walking Environment Officer) – She outlined some of the aspects of her role. She is involved in making sure the countryside is accessible to all. She focuses on the whole walking environment, access to the countryside, housing development, change of use of paths from footpath only to dual use with other forms e.g. cycles.

- Ann Adams (incoming Chairman) – she mentioned that she has a big challenge to get things re-started with the programme. She thanked all of the work that Richard Davis, Mike Garner and Diana Davis had done over the years.
- Jim White – He mentioned that if there are any issues with canal towpaths then let him know. He did mention that part of the Stroud Canal towpath will be closed in the near future due to essential maintenance involving the railway bridge which has caused a lot of interest with railway enthusiasts.
- Richard Davis – He thanked everybody involved with the Group especially Mike Garner and Penny Fernando.

There being no other business the outgoing Chairman closed the meeting at 20:15.

CHAIR'S REPORT

I hope that this newsletter finds you all well and Covid free, I look forward to never having to mention Covid again.

As restrictions have gradually lifted both nationally and for Ramblers we have been working to get the group back to normal. Throughout the last 18 months our membership numbers have not fluctuated much and we currently have 368 members. Initially we started with a rolling walks programme, the numbers of people walking were low, generally below 10 but this is gradually picking up on our latest two month programme. We intend to continue with a two month programme until the end of February which will then get us back to our normal time frame.

Our biggest problem is finding enough walk leaders and if this doesn't improve there could be gaps in the programme in the future. Myself or Sally would be happy to mentor any new walk leaders and help you to plan where to walk if necessary. If you know someone else who leads walks I am sure they would also help you. I would like to say a big thank you to those of you who have already stepped forward to lead walks.

We have decided to again hold our AGM via zoom on Nov 13th at 6.30pm as we are aware that not everyone is happy to sit indoors with other people. We do also have a few roles that need to be filled this year. For as long as I have been going to AGMs we have asked for someone to take on the role of publicity officer as we are often missing opportunities to promote our group, the Cotswold Way celebrations which went through our area and the fact that Tony Drake was a Member of SCR being one. To address this lack of publicity Sue Jones has set up a Facebook page for us, which you can access either through our website or your Facebook page. Thanks, Sue. Whilst this has helped to promote the group we still need someone to explore other opportunities.

Michele Holden who is the group area chair is also the Walking Environmental Officer for the whole of Gloucestershire (I'm told this used to be called the Countryside Officer), she reviews all the large planning applications and there are now so many that she feels she needs some help.

She is asking all the groups to try to recruit a member to help her. One example in our area is an application for 800 houses on a green field site at Cam further eroding the countryside. This is on top of the huge development planned for Sharpness and others to follow.

Mike Garner, who has been a leading light in the group for decades, has decided to give up all his roles as soon as possible. At a time when technology was unheard of, Mike, using a monthly magazine* about Computing, built us a website from scratch, with the result that we have one of the best Ramblers websites around. Sally will be doing her best, with the support of Mark from Bookmark Computers, to keep this up to date. Olivia is also helping Sally with the photos. One of Mike's many crucial jobs was Walks Co-ordinator, without whom we could not function as a group. The job of walks co-ordinator consists mainly of entering details supplied by leaders and we are delighted to say that a volunteer has come forward to take this on. More details at the AGM.

*(only those of you who are over 70 will remember those magazines - the first copy was free, and then you had to pay, and you could learn everything from stuffing toys to building shelves!)

In order to minimize the problems of just 1 person knowing the various tasks we carry out, we are working towards extending that knowledge among more members of the group, so if you want to volunteer, we can certainly use your expertise in some form.

FOOTPATH SECRETARY'S REPORT

A new format for activity and status reporting that is common with other FP secretaries in the Area, and which is on a shared cloud drive, has been agreed and adopted. This improves communication between group footpath secretaries and with Area, eases reporting, and ensures continuity. I have not yet transferred the legacy issues to this format. Of issues raised since March this year 51 are marked for no further action or resolved. The following outstanding issues are yet to be addressed or closed.

9 Hinton

8 Westonbirt with Lasborough

7 Kingscote

4 Long Newton

4 Standish (thanks are due to Penny Fernando for reviewing several in this parish and closing three)

My next step will be to address the 32 items in the above five parishes. There are 52 in other parishes, each of which has fewer than four issues reported.

In addition to footpath reports I have reviewed relevant planning applications from Stroud District Council and formally objected to three. Finally, a new public right of way has been established along an established path across Breakheart Hill, North Nibley.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The SCR remain in fine fettle financially and the report for the last accounting period is simple with no receipts and just one small photocopying expense since July:

Accounts July 31st – September 1st 2021

Holiday Account: No change: Balance **£241.02**

Main Account:

Balance on July 31st 2021: 2590.79

Photocopying costs 5.57

Balance on September 1st 2021 2585.22 **£2585.22**

TOTAL ASSETS £2826.24