

Newsletter of the Waveney & District Group of the Ramblers

Number 81: March 2020

Editorial

For many Waveney Ramblers, this is the favourite programme of walks, as we move into spring and early summer with the, hopefully, dry and warmer days which are ideal for walking. Also, many walk leaders venture away from the safer bet Sandlings strip to explore new walks where the mud will have dried up! This programme includes a good mix of both.

There have been a lot of changes in the Waveney Ramblers executive and committee members, following a number of resignations at the turn of the year. Details of the new members looking after our interests are shown on the back cover and also in the article from our new Chair, Diana Covey. On your behalf, I would like to thank them for taking up these important roles and wish them well for this next year's challenges.

Also, I would like to thank Alex and his 'team' for guiding us through some very difficult and all-embracing legislation that impacted on so many things we do; and for pushing us to embrace relevant technology (see Neil's article inside), moving us well into the 21st century. Thank you.

Many members will be delighted to hear that David and Doreen are planning a coach walk for 7th June, with a destination of Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk. Please support this initiative if you can.

Tony Langford - Editor



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Your 2020 Committee members – What do they do?

At the reconvened AGM, on 9 January, I am pleased to say we were able to appoint a very nearly full Committee. The post holders elected were in line with the current Constitution, with the addition of a new post, Technology Officer, which was agreed by the members present. The only post left vacant, as it has been for the last two years, was Social Secretary. If any Member would like to discuss that role, please contact either the Chair, or Secretary, as listed below:

Chair: Diana Covey - dianacovey@btinternet.com

Vice Chair: within Committee (if Chair not available)

Secretary: Barry Covey – barrycovey@btinternet.com

Treasurer: Mike Jeffery

Membership Secretary: Mary Shaheen (temporarily, this role is covered by Barry)

Programme Secretary: Roger Moore

Footpath Secretary 1: Robert Newell

Footpath Secretary 2: Pat Harrington

Area Representative 1: David Harmer

Area Representative 2: Diana Covey

Technology Officer: Neil Bauers

Committee members: Honorary member Michael Farrow, Sue Gowen

Auditor: Robert Newell

I would like to thank the contributions of all past, and present, Committee members, as without them there would be no Waveney Ramblers, but am especially pleased to see a new appointment in Sue Gowen, as she will be able to represent the views of the many Wednesday walkers, something I have always been keen on.

At the AGM, I was asked: “What happens at a Committee meeting?” which is a very fair point. My immediate response was that, along with the AGM, we hold three general Committee meetings a year, in which the usual format includes reports from officers, discussions around such things as initiatives received from the Ramblers Association, forthcoming Group events, and any other business raised at the time.

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On reflection, I feel my response to be still much the same, but would just add the obvious point that this is all done within the format of a pre-arranged agenda. Prior to the meeting, the Secretary circulates the agenda among the Committee, containing all the standard procedures of apologies received, agreement of previous meeting's minutes, matters arising, etc., followed by a request for any additional items. In this way, each Committee member may bring forward for discussion any matters in which they may have a particular interest, or has been brought to them by any other Group members. The elected Committee is there to represent your interests, as well as uphold the objects of the Ramblers.

I think I would be correct in saying that for the majority of our members the full and interesting Walk Programme is the main focal point of the Group, for which I would like to thank the huge efforts of Roger Moore, Neil Bauers and all the walk leaders. However, don't forget we always need fresh blood on the Committee, and also as walk leaders.

May the Group long continue, and grow.

Diana – Chair of Waveney Ramblers



Waveney Ramblers' Tea Party

All members are invited to the annual tea party, to join past members who served as founders of the Group, past Committee members, walk leaders, or just jolly good company.

This event was started a few years back by Peter and Glenys Westmacott, as a way of bringing past members back together, to share memories and photos of their rambling days. Due to its great success, the tea party has been continued, with the event being opened up to present members as well.

At the AGM, those members present decided to hold the tea party from 3 to 5 pm, on Saturday 18th April, at Ilketshall St Andrew Village Hall, NR34 8HX, near the church, where some of you will have been before.

Your invitation is included with the Newsletter, so please come along, but don't forget to let us know in good time, so we don't run out of sandwiches, cake and tea!



Harleston and Starston walk



Waveney Way19 - Kessingland and Pakefield walk



Mulled wine instead of an apple stop at Woodton



New Year's Day walk at Dunwich

Tech Stuff

The Website

We've had 53 thousand clicks on walks and photo galleries since counting started last September, that's around 250 visits per day. With over 400 walks and photo galleries on the website, on average, each walk is looked at two or three times per week. The walks programme is visited around 25 times per day. The other pages on the website attract less traffic. These numbers are inflated by people arriving by accident when they search for obscure village names and our website has one of the few mentions on-line. It's all good publicity though.

Facebook

This becomes most useful when we need to announce programme changes at short notice. Meanwhile, it's a pleasant social area with shared photos and walk routes. We've had very few problems of the type that gets into the news media. We still have relatively few members using Facebook, with 41 in January. With increasing usage, this forum could become more useful for discussion and planning.

The Ramblers' App

This works with Android and iPhones. It's useful for finding walks with our own and other local groups. If you are visiting another part of the UK, you can find walks in that area.

The national Ramblers association would like walk leaders to register people onto walks. This is to gather strong campaigning evidence for the numbers of walkers using footpaths, railway crossings and other amenities. Neil might experiment with this but he'll need a new phone first. We are not planning to rush this process. There will be no pressure for walk leaders to go down this route. It might be useful if walkers carried their membership card. This is scanned to log you onto the walk. Other local groups are ahead of us in this respect and Neil has been scanned a couple of times.

Eventually, the app might be able to tell you how far you have walked with the Ramblers this month or year. New features like this are being gradually added to the app.

In summary, we are a walking group and the technology should never get in the way of that key aim. From time to time it might help though.

Neil – Waveney Ramblers' Technology Officer

A few hardy
members take
Ramblers' Trustee
Aynsley for a
short walk after
the Area AGM



Wet walk in the South
Elmhams and a choice
of two footbaths...

...and a 'bridge
under troubled
water', prompts
another diversion



Suffolk Area Council Meeting

With David Harmer, I attended the latest Area Council meeting on 6 January. David has been attending these meetings, as your representative, for many years and he invited me along this time. Indeed, David has been, and continues to be, the editor of the Area Newsletter, which he then distributes to the Group. He has also attended the AGM of the General Council, as one of the two delegates from each Area, so, all in all, I was attending with an "old hand."

What struck me, at the meeting, was what a bunch of hard-working, enthusiastic volunteers I was amongst. And that's the thing, they are volunteers who do an awful lot of work on our behalf. Changes are always afoot with, for example, Gavin Monk working in close harmony with the Ramblers Association and local Groups, in our case Neil Bauers, to bring everybody up to speed with technological advances.

Another initiative includes increased cooperation between Suffolk County Council and local Groups in clearing overgrown footpaths – watch this space, as it is something previous Chair, Alex McPherson, talked about, and the present Committee will be investigating, asking for volunteers to join this worthy project in the near future.

Lastly, Area wishes to appoint a new Volunteer Training and Recruitment Officer. A job description is ready, but unfortunately nobody to fill the post yet. If you are interested, please contact Roley Wilson, Area Chair, or Jan Palmer, Area Secretary, via the contact details on the Area website.

Diana – Chair of Waveney Ramblers



40 Years and Still Counting

Thelma Waller is the longest serving active member of Waveney Ramblers. She joined the Group on the 5th of December 1980, which means that in December 2020 she will have completed 40 years continuous membership. Well done Thelma.

Contributions for the next edition of *The Waveney Rambler* should be sent, by **24th May, 2020**, to: **Tony Langford**, 16 Holton Road, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8HF (tel. 01986 875694) or email to: langfordajs@hotmail.com. Contributors please note that articles should not exceed **350 words**, unless permission is given by the editor. **Relevant photos are always welcome.**