



WWW Walkers Web Words

<http://www.chesterfieldramblers.org.uk>

News Issue 19



Editor and Publisher: Basil Merry

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New Chief Executive

The Ramblers' has appointed Benedict Southworth as the new Chief Executive as from 1 February 2012.

Benedict has more than 20 years of experience in the charity sector and has worked as a consultant to a long list of high profile charities.

A keen walker he recognises that this is a critical time for the organisation when threats to the way we see and enjoy the countryside are under increasing threat.

www.ramblers.org.uk

New Group Committee Members introduce themselves

Ros Jackson

Mud, mud, glorious mud and pelting rain or snow. We would never have considered going for a walk in such conditions before we joined the Ramblers 5 years ago. We are still reticent but have been well-trained and now venture out in less than perfect conditions. I have been asked to give an introduction to myself as a new council member and thought I should start by saying why joining the ramblers has been such a joy for Dave and I. It's not just the fact that we now try to walk regularly (mainly Sunday and Wednesday's long walks). There is the company, the many friends we have made, and the sheer pleasure of being outside in the open air with free exercise.

Dave and I retired 6 years ago. We had always been walkers, but fair weather only and approx. 8 miles maximum. I previously worked for the Health Service and had been based mainly indoors. On retirement both of us wanted to spend more time walking and joined the Chesterfield group. With varying numbers of friends from the Ramblers we have now completed 5 long distance footpaths over the past 4 years (something I would never have considered myself capable of until joining the Ramblers), St Cuthberts, Coast to Coast, Offa's Dyke, The West Highland Way and The Great Glen Way. I particularly enjoy planning walks and lead approx. 6 per year for the Wednesday and Sunday long walks. I am fascinated by maps so like to try different routes with varying degrees of success (some of our group may remember the electric fence episode from last summer!!). As a councillor I hope I will be able to make a positive contribution to the running of the Chesterfield group. As members we should all be proud of our group; my understanding is that it provides one of the most comprehensive programmes of any in the country.

Ros Jackson

Simon Riddington

As an incoming committee member, I'd like to thank members for their support and I'll hopefully be seeing lots of you out on walks this year. I'll be leading several walks in the next programme – so a little spring sunshine would be gratefully appreciated in Rowsley come May time!

Although I've been a keen walker for a number of years I only joined the Ramblers seven years ago when I found myself re-walking the same routes again and again. The first group I walked with was North West Kent and it was with them and other groups in the South East that I got to explore parts of Sussex, Surrey, Essex and of course Kent. Consequently, I still feel that I know the South Downs better than some parts of the Peak District! I moved back home to Chesterfield last year and along with my partner Charlotte I've become an active member of the Sunday walking group.

I also helped out with the walking festival in May, assisting the 30+ walkers who attempted the Chesterfield Round Walk. I also volunteer with the Footpaths Group and gain a great sense of satisfaction that the steps that we build and the gates that we install will help to improve access for everyone and enable them to enjoy the beautiful countryside we have here in North East Derbyshire.

Simon Riddington

What is Social Networking?

Social networking is going for a walk and chatting to others along the way. Right? Of course it is.

But for many, the growth of the internet has brought an additional type of social networking - using websites like Facebook.

Facebook has come from nowhere a few years ago to become a band of 800 million members worldwide. It began very locally at Harvard in the US as a system whereby (male) undergraduates could go on-line and rate the attractiveness of their female counterparts in the university.

Despite its simple, sexist beginnings the potential was quickly appreciated and it rapidly became an international site where people could communicate on-line with their 'friends', share conversations, post photos, and ask questions of each other.

Some loved it and might spend all day on it – others saw it as superficial and a time-waster.

It has however moved on in the last couple of years and been adopted by many companies and organizations as well as individuals.

Why has this happened? I think traditional websites are invaluable and give useful information to those who visit them....but they don't, by and large, give their users the ability to interact easily.

Facebook allows free and immediate two way communication. It allows people to post stuff - and discussions to develop. Anyone can have their say and it's there on the site instantly in front of them as they type it.

Many organisations (including Ramblers HQ) have accordingly provided links between their website and a Facebook page - and vice versa.

Today people are increasingly accessing the internet, not just on desktop and laptop computers, but on tablet computers, on televisions, and perhaps most significantly on mobile phones.

Do we all have to adopt this world ? Of course not. Traditional forms of social networking and communication will always continue alongside it.

But for those who do want to get involved and feel they need advice, look out for an anorak in an anorak next time you go walking - and seek help. 😊

Chesterfield & NE Derbyshire Ramblers are now on Facebook, linking with our website.

You don't have to be a Facebook member to view the postings, but if you do sign up (free) you can comment on things, post stuff like walk reports, or just click on 'like.'

<https://www.facebook.com/ChesterfieldandNEDerbyshireRamblers?sk=wall>

or google 'Facebook Chesterfield & NE Derbyshire Ramblers



David Moore, Group Chairman

New members

Since the last issue the following have joined the group:-

Richard Kurcewicz	Chesterfield
E.L.O. Leddy-Owen	Holymoorside
David and Sandra Poore	Sheffield
Mr and Mrs A.R H. Picton	Chesterfield
Peter O'Brien	Chesterfield

Please make them welcome.

Practical Work update

During October volunteers from the group provided 132 hours of work to improve footpaths in the area. Work took place in Brampton, Barlborough, and Wingerworth and involved replacing stiles with wicket gates, and installing new steps up steep slippery banks.

November was a busy month commencing with the application of 20 tons of road scalplings to the surface of Martin's Lane, Wingerworth which, hopefully, completes our work there. Readers of walk magazine will be aware of the details from the last issue. In total volunteers provided 186 hours of labour.

Old stone steps were cleared of accumulated debris, and new wooden steps installed near Brindwoodgate in Barlow when a footpath was restored to its correct definitive line. A stile was also replaced by a wicket gate. This action followed a report to DCC by a volunteer on one of our led walks some 9 months earlier.

5 stiles were replaced by wicket gates in one day in Wessington and Brackenfield near Roadnook Farm. The following week saw a major vegetation cut back on the footpath leading up from Cathole in Holymoorside in preparation for the installation of steps. This, again, followed reports by members of difficulties experienced on the steep slippery slope whilst on a guided walk. Subsequently an initial 23 steps were installed until the volunteers exhausted DCC's supply. The job was virtually completed in January with another 26 steps installed.

Another path re-alignment back to where it should be was started in December in North Wingfield near Hillyfields. As the 'line' was completely overgrown by large blackthorn and other trees a DCC Ranger with a chain saw led the way. After clearance a set of 7 steps were installed, together with 3 way mark posts. Again more work took place in January.

Finally 4 stiles were replaced by wicket gates in Calow near Laurel Bush Farm – a further 4 will follow to complete the path shortly. 54 hours of labour were provided in the month, with activities cut short by poor weather conditions and the festive season.

Simultaneously volunteers have completed the surveying of Killamarsh thereby completing the surveys of all North East Derbyshire. Re- surveys of the paths of North Wingfield, and Brackenfield are under way as part of a rolling programme of reviews.

These surveys will doubtless reveal more areas requiring attention. Additional volunteers who can assist in any of these tasks are welcomed. Training can be arranged where required.

Please Contact the Footpath Secretary – (01246) 233179.

Walking For Health

In December the Ramblers Board of Trustees approved the submission of a tender to take on the running of the Walking For Health scheme in England. Nearly 70,000 regular walkers take part in over 600 health walk schemes across England led by 12,000 volunteers some of whom also lead Ramblers walks.

There will be other bidders possibly with alternative sources of funding. If the Ramblers are accepted as the preferred bidder negotiations will begin on the funding conditions. These should be completed by March and the Ramblers would then make a final decision on taking over WFH. If the Ramblers become the new host it will deliver Walking For Health as an externally funded project similar to Get Walking Keep Walking.

Walking Festival web site

The local walking festival will have a dedicated web site, allowing booking on line, available from this month – chesterfieldwalkingfestival.co.uk

The brochure should also be available at the same time.

One point to mention whilst we will still be providing a series of circular walks no reference will be made to the Olympics, Olympics rings, mascots, logos etc. to avoid the draconian copyright provisions incorporated into the special Act of Parliament which seeks to protect all such copyright matters.

London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006

Motor Vehicles in the Countryside

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) has started a consultation on the management of motorised vehicles in the countryside by issuing a revised policy. Details are available on their website with comments required by 14 March 2012.

Our Group has decided to respond jointly with all the other Derbyshire Ramblers' Groups to ensure we speak with one voice. In addition the Group will join the Peak District Green Lanes Alliance (PDGLA) who will be responding in a similar vein.

Readers of the Derbyshire Times will be aware of recent letters from supporters of motor vehicle use and our Chairman has submitted a response – which was published this week.

Individual group members are urged to respond to the consultation.

More Area News

Copies of the SYNED Area News were recently circulated electronically to registered members and by post to all other Group members. This was at the request of SYNED, the Area to which our Group is a member, comprising South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Groups.

To complete the local picture electronic copies of the **Derbyshire Area News** are available **on request**. Contact the Editor.

The Derbyshire Area web site now includes mention of our Group and a web site link.

www.derbyshireramblers.org.uk

County round up

Ramblers' have been blamed for a 'ticking time-bomb' that has 'spiralled out of control' and is costing taxpayers dear according to a top councillor.

The problem is they've apparently had the cheek to claim lots of unrecorded rights of way when the money could be better spent on services according to this councillor. The fact such claims have to be made by 2026 under current legislation has created the surge in enquiries. After that year no new rights of way can be 'claimed' by historical users of the routes. This deadline could be easily extended by the Government if the will was there.

The council he is a member of reduced rights of way staff from 20 to 10 and cut footpath spending by £250,000 last year. One wonders what caused the spiral to get out of control.

The council concerned is Nottinghamshire County Council which seems to be unaware of the economic and health benefits of walking.

They are also 'concerned' that the Secretary of State has confirmed a public bridleway in part of Sherwood Forest known locally as 'the desert'. The reason is that a teenager was killed in a quad bike accident there in 2010 when the bike was being illegally driven by a 15 year old. They seem unaware that motorised vehicles are not permitted on bridleways.

In the same vein Nottingham City Council and Network Rail have had plans to 'stop-up' a public footpath, across Nottingham Station (leaving a useless cul-de-sac) refused by the Planning Inspectorate following an inquiry decision in December 2011. The plans were part of a redevelopment of the site but many locals believed part of the objective was to cut fare dodging.

Fortunately the Inspector said 'it provides a unique experience which the suggested alternative route couldn't – a traffic free route within the city which in addition provides convenient link for a large number of users to and from residential areas, work places, and other facilities'.

The main objectors at the public inquiry were the Ramblers' supported by local residents.

Be warned such blinkered attitudes to Rights of Way as are demonstrated above could happen in Derbyshire. Only the Ramblers' (with the few Peak and Northern members in the area) show any interest in protecting, maintaining, improving and promoting Rights of Way.

Please persuade more people to join the Ramblers' before it's too late.

Source: Nottingham Post 28.12.2011

Planning Inspectorate decision: FPS/Q3060/5/3. (Sheffield residents need to be aware of a similar but different situation at Sheffield Midland Station where fare dodging is seen as an excuse to block historic access.)

Booking a holiday?

If you're booking a walking holiday there is a good chance you will be using either HF Holidays or Ramblers Worldwide Holidays.

Following the surprise and controversial change of preferred partner by the Ramblers to the former HF Holidays make a payment to the Ramblers' on any holiday booked by a member. The amount ranges from £10 to £40 depending on the destination and the payment is made to Head Office.

In response Ramblers Holidays has announced a Walking Partnership. This will make a similar payment but directly to the Group chosen.

In each case membership of the Ramblers' has to be notified and the payment claimed. There is no additional cost to the traveller.

Full details are still being finalised but our Group will complete the registration necessary for Ramblers Holidays. Indications are the claim can be made **before travel** enabling some back claims.

One suggestion is that any payments received by the Group from this source go into the ring-fenced Round Walk fund to ensure they are not used purely to reduce HO costs.

Access land closures 2012

As last Spring the Moscar Estate will be exercising its right to restrict access under s22 of the CRow Act 2000 again next year. This is to try to minimise damage by trampling and disturbance to the ground-nesting birdlife during its most critical time.

The dates are shown on the Access Centre's notice,(available from the editor on request), which will be displayed at all access points. Public footpaths will not be affected nor, as last year, will be the concessionary footpaths on Stanedge and Derwent Edges. This early notice is to allow organisers of events over this increasingly popular area plenty of time to circularise colleagues and update websites.

Jeremy Archdale.

Estate Office

Moscar Lodge

0114 2630393

National Nature Reserves

Natural England has proposed to dedicate NE National Nature reserves for access under section 16 of the CRow Act 2000.

This raises the possibility of exploring access for higher rights users such as cyclists and horse riders. Reserves in Derbyshire include Dove Dale, Calke Park, and Kinder Scout.

East Midlands Local Access Forum

Williamthorpe Nature Reserve

Approximately 72 hectares of DCC-owned land at this former colliery site near Holmewood was officially declared a Local Nature Reserve on 2 June 2011.

The importance of walking (7)

If you're going to try cross-country walking, start with a small country.

Dronfield Area Walks Ideas

In Issue 18 we gave details of walks available online, and in printed form, around Ashover parish. This time it's the turn of Dronfield area.

The best site to use is that of our affiliates, Dronfield Footpaths and Bridleways Society (DF&BS) www.dronfieldfootpaths.org.uk which features 11 walks ranging from 4 miles to 11 miles. The walks include the North Chesterfield Way, Drone Valley Way, and the GHB Ward Walk.

The walk descriptions can be printed off from the foot of their walking programme – which you may also like to give a try.

Further suggestions of parish walking sites our members may be interested in would be welcomed.

Branching out

Following the scuppering of the planned sell off of Forestry Commission land an Independent Panel on Forestry has now been set up following the fierce debate on the future of the public forest estate.

The chair of the new body is reported as saying that 'what has become apparent through our work so far is that we must look at the future of all woods and forests, not just the one fifth managed by the Forestry Commission'.

This increase in reference terms is known in business circles as 'mission creep'.

The panel has already stated they want to see more woods created and more woods managed (only half of them not in the public estate are managed).

www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust Anniversary

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) is 50 years old in 2012 having been founded in 1962.

In our area one of the sites they own is Duckmanton Railway Cutting (SK423703), near Arkwright Town, which is important for its coal measures geology including different rock types and fossils. Access to the site is restricted as the geology is relatively unstable.

Not far away they also own areas of upland woodland such as Chee Dale (SK120727), a site of Special Scientific Interest. Closer to home neutral grassland can be found at Carr Vale Flash (SK459701), one of the best bird-watching sites in Derbyshire.

The reserve at North Wingfield (SK40463) contains grassland and wetland areas much loved by water vole.

The largest site in our area is The Avenue Washlands (SK398668), once heavily polluted as a coking works, but now a wetland site teeming with many birds, including yellowhammers, and invertebrates including water vole and great crested newts. There are also a good number of orchids in summer.

In total DWT now has 41 nature reserves in the county covering 1557 acres.

It all proves wildlife doesn't only exist in Chesterfield Town Centre on a Friday night.

Flattish walks – Another book idea.

If you're looking for flattish walks old railway lines and canals are a good bet. Locally we're served well by both.

In respect of the latter Derbyshire is described in *Vinter's Railway Gazetteer – A guide to Britain's old railways that you can walk or cycle* as 'another of the great railway walking counties along with Devon and Durham'. Routes described include Ashbourne – Parsley Hay, Beighton-Killamarsh-Steveley, and Westhouses-Tibshelf-Holmewood. Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire also fare well.

In each case the Gazetteer provides full details, mileage, users, suitability for prams, pushchairs, and wheelchairs, any designation e.g. long distance path, national cycle network, and the original railway companies concerned.

ISBN978-0-7524-6011-6. Paperback by Jeff Vinter costs £9.99 but available on Amazon for about £6.

www.railwayramblers.org.uk.

Membership about £8 p.a.

Ode to a spell checker (Owed Two A Spell Chequer)

Eye halve a spelling chequer,
it came with my pea sea.
It plainly marques, four my revue,
miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word
and weight four it two say,
Weather eye am wrong oar write
it shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid,
it nose bee fore two long.
And eye can put the error rite
it's rare lea ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it,
I am shore your pleased two no.
Its letter perfect awl the weigh,
my chequer tolled me sew

Next Edition

The next full Issue will be towards the end of April. Newsflashes will be issued in between as necessary.

If there's anything you wish to communicate to other group members please don't be shy.

The deadline is 20 April 2012.